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CULTIVATIONS.

ALL men are not agriculturists, horticulturists, or arboriculturists; but yet almost all men are *cultivators*. By this it is meant that men in general cultivate, or coax, or unduly appreciate and fondle, some particular feature of their persons, or else, perhaps, some integument connected with their persons, to such a degree as to be rather conspicuous, while to every thing else they only give the ordinary degree of attention. There are many features of human nature which remain to be detected and described; and this is one—*Cultivations*. So far as I am aware, no one ever thought of pointing it out to mankind; the subject of cultivation has hitherto remained totally *uncultivated*. So it shall be no longer.

Hair, as the only part of the person which actually grows like a vegetable, is naturally a large subject of cultivation. The Cavaliers long ago cultivated love-locks, which they kept hanging down in graceful fashion from their temples. These locks, or curls, are now changed for tufts or bunches of hair, which the young men cultivate at the same place, and are ever shaking up and tedding, exactly as if it were a crop of hay instead of hair. Mark a modern beau as he walks along the street, and you will observe at one glance that the principal part of the man—the heart—the sensorium—the cynosure—the point from which all the rest evolves—the root of the man, in short, is the tuft under the right rim of his hat. All the rest of him is a mere pendulum, vibrating from this axis. As he walks along, he hardly feels that any other part of him is in existence, besides that. But he feels his tuft most intensely. Thought, feeling, every thing, lies concentrated in that; head, body, and limbs, are all alike mere members devolved from it. If you were to cut off the side-bunch of a modern beau in his sleep, he would, for the time, be utterly ruined. It would be like the polypus, deprived of every thing but a single leg; and he would require several months of dormant existence—that is, retirement from the streets—to let the better part of him grow out again from the worse, which had remained behind. Let not the demure Puritan, however, think that the joke lies all against the gay cavalier or beau. There may be as much of the sin of cultivation in the stroked and glossy hair of the Roundhead or *plain man*, as in the love-locks and bunches of their antipodes in sentiment. I have seen some men, who affected to be very unaffected, cultivate a peak on the top and centre of their brows as sedulously, and with as much inward gratulation on account of it, as ever I saw a dandy cultivate a tuft, or train a side-curl. It must be understood that there are cultivations of a negative character, as well as of a positive, and he who is guiltless of cultivation in his heart is alone guiltless. Next to curls stand whiskers. What a field of cultivation have we there! The whisker is a bounty of nature, which man does not like to refuse taking advantage of. The thing presses upon him—it is *there*; and to put it altogether aside, except upon the demand of temporary fashion, is scarcely to be thought of. Some men, however, are more able to resist the demon of whiskers than others. There are some men so prone to the temptations of this fiend, that they enlarge and enlarge their field of cultivation, by small and imperceptible degrees, till at length the whole chin falls a prey, excepting, perhaps, a small bit about the mouth, just enough to preserve the cultivator within the pale of the Christian church. Sometimes the Whisker Fiend makes an insidious advance or sally up towards the corners of the mouth;

and there—in those small creeks or promontories—does the sin of cultivation invariably flourish more proud and rampant than anywhere else. The whisker of the cheek is a broad, honest, candid, downright cultivation; but that down about the corners of the mouth is a sly and most impish one—a little pet sin, apt to beset its cultivator in a far less resistible fashion than any other; and it may, indeed, be said that he who has given himself fairly up to this crime is almost beyond redemption.

There are some men who cultivate white hands, with long fair nails. For nothing else do they care very particularly—all is well, if only their hands be neat. There is even a ridiculous notion that elegant hands are the most unequivocal test of what is called good birth. I can say, for my own part, that the finest hands I ever saw belonged to a woman who kept a butcher's shop in Musselburgh. So much for the nonsense about fine hands. Then there is a set of people who cultivate a ring on a particular finger—evidently regretting, from their manner of managing it, that the South Sea fashion of wearing such ornaments in the nose has not ever come into this country. Some men cultivate neat ebony canes with golden heads, which, they tell you, cost a guinea. Some cultivate a lisp. A few, who fall under the denomination of stout gentlemen, rejoice in a respectable swell of the haunch, with three wrinkles of the coat lying upon it in majestic repose. Some cultivate a neckcloth—some a shirt breast—some a jewelled pin, with a lesser pin at a little distance, which serves to it as a kind of anchor. There has also of late been a great fashion of cultivating chains about the waistcoat. Some only show about two inches of a gold or silver one between the buttons and the pocket; others, less modest, have themselves almost laced round and round with this kind of tracery. There is also to be detected, occasionally, a small patch of cultivation in the shape of a curious watch-key or seal, which depends from part of the chain, and is evidently a great pet. A not uncommon subject of cultivation is a gold watch.

In our time we have known some men whose taste for cultivation descended so low as the very foot: they took a pleasure in a particular jet of the trouser at the bottom, where it joined the shoe. Then there is a class who cultivate silk umbrellas. It is a prevalent idea among many men that a silk umbrella is an exceedingly *genteel* thing. They therefore have an article of this kind, which they are always carrying in a neat careful manner, so as to show that it is silk. They seem to feel as if they thought all right when they have their silk umbrella in their hand: it is a kind of patent of respectability. With a silk umbrella, they could meet the highest personages in the land and not be abashed. A silk umbrella is, indeed, a thing of such vast effect, that they would be content to go in humble guise in every other respect, provided they only had this saving clause to protect them. Nay, it is not too much to suppose them entertaining this belief—that five-and-twenty shillings put forth on a good silk umbrella produces as much value, in dignity, as five pounds spent upon good broad cloth. How some men do fondle and cultivate silk umbrellas!

There is a species of cultivators who may, in some cases, be very respectable, and entitled to our forbearance, but are, in others, worthy of a little ridicule. I mean the health-seekers; the men who go out at five in the morning to cultivate an appetite, and regularly chill every sharp-set evening party they attend, by sitting like Melancholy retired, ostentatiously insisting that they "never take supper." When a health-seeker takes a walk, he keeps his coat wide open, his

vest half open—seems, in short, to woo the contact of the air—and evidently regrets very much that he cannot enjoy it in the manner of a bath. As he proceeds, he consumes air, as a steam-boat consumes coal; inasmuch that, when he leaves the place, you would actually think the atmosphere has a fatigued and exhausted look, as if the whole oxygen had been absorbed to supply his individual necessities. Wherever this man goes, the wind rises behind him, by reason of the vacuum which he has produced. He puffs, pants, fights, strives, struggles for health. When he returns from his morning walk, he first looks in the glass, to congratulate himself on the bloom which he has been cultivating in his cheek, and thereafter sits down to solace the appetite which he finds he has nursed into a kind of fury. At any ordinary time, he could spring from his bed at nine o'clock, and devour four cups of tea, with bread, ham, eggs, and haddocks, beyond reckoning. But he thinks it necessary to walk four hours, for the purpose of enabling himself to take eight cups, and a still more unconscionable proportion of bread, ham, eggs, and haddocks. He may be compared, in some measure, to the fat oxen which are sometimes shewn about as wonders, though apparently there is nothing less wonderful, the obvious natural means being taken. These oxen, if left to themselves in a good park, would become very respectable oxen—a little *en-bon-point*, perhaps, but no more. But, being treated otherwise, they are rendered unnecessarily fat and unwieldy; and so it is with the appetite of the health cultivator.

CULTIVATIONS, it will thus be observed, is a subject of vast extent, and of great importance, not only to the *landed interest*, but to all the other interests of the country. I should be glad to treat it at full length in a separate volume, for which, I doubt not, ample materials might be found. But I must content myself with giving it in the mean time only a kind of *topping*, as the farmers say; and perhaps I may return to it next *harvest*.

VICISSITUDES OF THE EARTH.

No study can be more universally interesting than that which leads us to an acquaintance with the changes our earth has undergone in past ages. If it be possible to ascertain the order of those changes, and the probable periods in which they were effected, it is clear that we may form a complete history of the planet we inhabit, for the entire period necessary to produce the appearances within reach of examination, as well as to infer, with something like certainty, the course of future revolutions. With respect to the origin of the materials composing the globe, science and observation can give us no information. But the vicissitudes to which they have been subjected, and the agents which have been most energetic in operating these vicissitudes, we can easily explore, with the certainty of acquiring information more and more accurate as we prosecute the investigation.

The science which employs itself in this task is called GEOLOGY, or the study of the structure of the earth. A system, which would account for the original birth and organization of the globe, is called *Cosmogony*; but no system of this nature can be more than a series of guesses strung together in some plausible order, or an hypothesis, since nature, though she offers us abundance of signs by which we may learn the changes to which she has been subjected, gives us no indication of a period when she began to exist, or of the mode in which the material universe was brought into being.

Now, the first idea which must strike any one who looks, even in the most superficial manner, on the natural objects by which he is surrounded, is, that every portion of the earth has undergone total, and, until they are accounted for, stupendous changes. If he dig a hole in a peat-moss, he finds huge trees rooted in spots where now there is only a scrubby moor; in fact, cut through the soil of a verdant meadow, he may find a bed of peat enclosing the trunks of trees; if he go still lower, he discovers a bed of clay, including the beds of fresh water fish; still lower, the shells of sea-fish will be intermingled; while below this last layer, or stratum, the shells of salt water shell fish, or, as a naturalist would call them, marine testacea, which have no river or fluviatile species mixed with them. Again, a mountain stream, the sudden melting of ice, or an unusual frost, detaches a fragment from the side of a hill; and behold, similar layers of buried trees, and shells, and bones, are suddenly exposed to view on the elevated mountain precipice! The native of the district collects some of these shells; he has never seen any like them before; no such fish inhabit the neighbouring lakes, or rivers, or ocean, and he preserves them in silent and ignorant amazement. At length a traveller arrives; to him the unknown curiosities are shown; and he redoubles the perplexity of the possessor by informing him that he has frequently collected similar shells inhabited by living fish on the shores of the Indian Ocean, or the banks of some distant river. Ten thousand conflicting ideas now crowd upon the collector's mind. Curiosity so startlingly awakened cannot slumber until some satisfaction has been given to its restless spirit. Did these very objects before me once inhabit those distant climes where their brethren now reside? Were they swept from their original seat by the resistless force of some mighty deluge, and left to perish in these ungenial climes? He looks at the hill-side, and the regular order in which he sees layer after layer deposited, checks this conjecture. Surely, had such been the cause of their transportation, masses would have been heaped upon each other in wild confusion. Can they then have once made this their home and dwelling place? Was this once an expanse of waters fitted for the reception and support of creatures which require the heat of a tropical sun? If so, how can the climate have undergone so miraculous a change? Has the sun changed his course? Such are his probable reflections, until he puts an end to his perplexities in one of those ways, according to the character of his mind. If his intellect be restless, impatient, and feeble, after revolving the matter once or twice, and "finding no end in wandering mazes lost," he discards it altogether from his thoughts as impracticable and useless; if he be a pert, conceited, reasoning thing, ever skipping from conclusion to conclusion, with a sneer for all who do not imitate his agility, he straightway forms an hypothesis, quits his single trace of facts, and flits away to some new topic. Should another traveller pay him a visit, and detail new facts inconsistent with his theory, he gives himself no trouble about that. Ignorance and self-conceit have a ready balm for such wounds, and he contents himself with thinking, if he does not absolutely remark, with the Frenchman, that it is "so much the worse for the facts." But if he has a patient, reflecting spirit, a true desire for knowledge, and a proper sense of the united extent of his information—if, in short, he is by nature and by habit a philosopher in the true sense of the word, he treasures up his acquired knowledge, and sets diligently to work to add to his store. He digs new holes, cuts the face of other hills, carefully observes the appearances offered to his view, and procures all the information in his power from those whose observations have been more extensive than his own, or carried on in another direction. Thus he may hope in time to acquire sufficient information to enable him to form some just idea of the causes of the various and apparently inconsistent appearances he has noticed. The first of these classes are evidently incapable of inquiring with effect into any subject. Numbers of the second, and a few of the third and rarest class, have occupied themselves in geology. Among those, incomparably the most distinguished is Professor Lyell, the Newton of the science, whose views I shall now proceed to explain in as simple and as clear a manner as I can. Indeed, it would be difficult to state Professor Lyell's views of the great law which governs the changes to which the structure of the earth is liable, otherwise than simply and clearly; for simplicity is the characteristic of all the great laws of nature; and when once elucidated, they appear to have been, from the first, a most obvious solution of the phenomena or appearances.

Like all other great philosophers, or men who have been remarkably successful in developing the laws of nature, Professor Lyell has constructed his simple hypothesis upon an almost boundless accumulation of facts. In the industry with which he has amassed information respecting the state of the globe, and the cautious use he has made of his materials, he has no superior except the great master of human knowledge, Aristotle, and the reviser of the true Aristotelian mode of philosophising, Lord Bacon.

Before proceeding to explain Lyell's system, it is necessary to point out some of the errors he has to

combat. Hitherto geologists, when at a loss to account for the traces every where left on the face of the earth of gigantic change, have called in to their aid the unbridled violence of the elements. They have supposed the earth at some past era to have been seized with convulsive paroxysms, which have dislocated all its parts, and shattered its very frame-work. That after these chaotic agitations, it has again settled down into a comparatively quiescent state. In one of these happy intervals we at present exist, warned only of the lurking energies which have wrought these tremendous results, and which may again probably annihilate, in one vast explosion, the present order of things, by the low growl of some insignificant volcano, the slight tremor of a local earthquake, or the ravages of a partial inundation. These philosophers wielded the powers of nature much in the same way as the pre-Newtonian astronomers did the framework of the heavens. As the latter lavished upon the celestial architecture, spheres, cycles, and epicycles, without end, "to save the phenomena," so have the former discharged the earthquake, the volcano, and the deluge, with remorseless fury over the fair face of creation. Were they at a loss to account for the elevation of a mountain ridge? Straightway the subterranean mines were charged, and an explosion which would shake creation to the centre shot the Andes up into the regions of air. Were they perplexed by the remains of marine animals on the summits of lofty mountains? Some sudden inversion of the planet hurled an ocean over the heights, and transported thither fragments and relics from the most opposite and distant regions. Such was the recent state of the science of geology. The entire theory of paroxysms and convulsions was as completely a tissue of inventions, supported by no analogy in nature to account for appearances, as the cycles and epicycles of the astronomers. However, Newton arose, and, by the announcement of the simple law of gravity, put an end for ever to the din of conflicting spheres, and the dizzy maze of centric and eccentric orbs. The simple fact announced by Professor Lyell, as the result of extensive observation and calculation, which is to dispense with these periodical returns of agitation, is, that the operations of nature, as seen around us from day to day, are fully adequate to the production of every change which we can ascertain to have taken place in the structure of the globe. He tells us that we may daily see processes going on, which, though insignificant to our limited and brief opportunities of observation, are yet sufficient, by their ceaseless operation, to level the loftiest mountains, fill the profoundest depths, dissipate existing continents, and elevate into their place the "oase and sunken bottom" of the present ocean.

To do justice to his theory, we must consider it under two divisions—the agencies by which these changes are to be effected, and the most probable popular objections to which it may be liable. These agencies are divided into two principal classes—inorganic and organic; that is to say, agents not endowed with life, and those endowed with life, or vegetables and animals. The inorganic causes of change are again subdivided into aqueous and igneous. The aqueous are streams, springs, tides, and currents. The igneous are the earthquake and volcano. These causes, incessant in their operation, are sufficient, according to Lyell,* to produce every change which can be traced in the structure of the earth, and in the distribution of sea and land. To establish this theory, he has collected an astonishing multitude of facts, comprehending almost all the remarkable earthquakes, eruptions, landslips, and floods, recorded in the annals of time. He shows us how the rivers are incessantly wearing down the hills from which they spring, and the soil through which they flow, and conveying the materials to the ocean; how tides are continually filling up arms of the sea, and conflicting currents excavating the floor of the ocean in one place, and heaping up huge accumulations in others. He tells us how earthquakes have occasioned the sudden subsidence or sinking of land in some quarters, and volcanoes have raised new mountains and islands in others. These changes have actually been effected during the very brief period of which we have any records. Now, then, if the same causes continue to operate through an indefinite series of ages, they are obviously sufficient to produce a revolution in the aspect of the globe, and, in the lapse of time, to restore it again to its present condition. Thus we can ascertain, that, within the last two thousand years, the upper part of the Adriatic has received accessions of land of many miles in extent from the deposits left in it by the Po, the Adige, and other rivers descending from the Alps. How can we, therefore, avoid the conclusion, that, in process of time, that gulf must become an alluvial valley, bounded by the Apennines on the west, and its present mountainous shores on the east, and irrigated by the lengthened Po wandering through the centre? Having once pictured such a result in our imagination, as the certain consequence of causes now in operation, we have only to turn our eyes to the great valleys through which many existing rivers flow, to recognise at once the process of their formation.

A recent intelligent traveller in the Highlands and

* Principles of Geology. By Charles Lyell Esq. F.R.S. 2 vols. 5vs.

Islands of Scotland describes to us his astonishment and delight in discovering the seas on the west coast filled with living creatures, all of which were engaged in the process of forming land. He perceived that the sea, from Shetland to the Mull of Cantyre, was filled with animals like glittering sand, each of which, on inspection, was found to consist of a minute spiral, resembling the worm of a ramrod, but not the hundredth of an inch in diameter. So numerous were these, that the water seemed muddy with their presence; and he calculated, that if all the hairs on the heads of the men, women, and children, born since the beginning of the world, were enumerated, and all their separate hairs were lives, these would not amount to one generation of this spiral people, born on Monday morning to die on Wednesday night, and so on for ever and ever. Such an infinity of number is absolutely appalling. But even this is nothing, when it is found that the intervals between these are filled by fifty different kinds of creatures, each of them fifty times smaller, and all engaged in the same endless occupation. The invisible, insensible toils of these ephemeral points, conspiring with others in one great design, working unseen, unheard for ever, guided by one volition, by that One Volition which cannot err, converts the liquid water into the solid rock; their bodies die, sink, and concrete; the bottom of the ocean, and the shores of islands, are gradually elevated by the morbid deposit; the deep ocean is at length converted by them into dry land, and extends the dominion of man, who sees it not, and knows it not, over regions which even his ships had scarcely traversed. Thus the Great Pacific, by other means than that of the alluvium of inflowing rivers, is destined, at some future day, to be a new continent.

Facts like these are enough, in my estimation, to indicate the principle of Professor Lyell's theory—a principle which was in fact recognised by some of the ancient philosophers. Indeed it is not to natural objects alone that the great principle of revolution, of decay, and reproduction, is applicable. Every succeeding addition to our knowledge appears to bring us back more and more directly to the views of the leading ancient philosophers, as though science, as well as the material world, had its periods of use, decay, and restoration. Every successive discovery of modern times appears to point more plainly to the principles of the ancients, as though all that we know had been known before, all that we discover discovered before, and the results only to have survived. The process by which the early philosophers arrived at those results has perished; hence doubt and contempt have been thrown upon them by concealed ignorance, until philosophy, after re-exploring the arcana of nature, appears to be finding her way once more to her original resting places. So true is it that there is nothing new under the sun.

In a limited sketch like this it is impossible to do more than indicate the line of argument followed in Professor Lyell's work. For the ample details of facts calculated to establish its truth, I must refer to the work itself.

Let us, however, consider one or two of the objections most likely to occur to plain people when the theory is first explained to them. Many persons are very ready to follow reasoning to a certain extent, who, when a more startling result is presented to them, find it impossible to assent, although it may be quite as fair a deduction as the former. For example, a man may say, "I can easily believe you, when you tell me that a peat-moss was once a forest, and that it was so less than two thousand years ago, when, in addition to the undeniable remains of trees, many of them still rooted in the ground, which I observe, I find beneath it the traces of a Roman road, and hear that the historians of that people mention the spot as a wood; but when I see a bed of coal of prodigious thickness extending quite across the bed of the Forth, at a considerable depth, and you call on me to believe that that too was once vegetable matter, I am staggered, I cannot go along with you." The only way to meet such persons is to show them some equal, or greater, wonder going on before their eyes in a manner which they cannot deny. Detail to him then what is now going on at the mouth of the Mississippi, and his incredulity must give way. In addition to the incalculable quantity of loose drift timber annually carried down and embedded in the Gulf of Mexico by that enormous stream, there is a single raft formed of torn-up trees, ten miles long, two hundred and twenty yards wide, and eight feet deep, the whole of which has been accumulated, in consequence of some accidental obstruction, in thirty-eight years. How insignificant, then, must this mass of timber, enormous as it is, be, when compared to what must have accumulated in the course of centuries at the mouth of the river! When the progress daily making by the river in shallowing the gulf is ascertained, it requires no distant geological view to look forward to a time when that expanse of water will be converted into a vast alluvial plain, through the centre of which the mighty stream will roll its extended course towards "the bated and retiring waters" of the Atlantic. Our objection will now at once perceive, that, whenever such a time shall come, there must be found beneath the bed of the river strata of vegetable origin, more extensive than imagination can conceive.

There may be no analogy between the actual cases, but the one is not more wonderful than the other; and on the other hand, they might have been similar. A single fact may sometimes occur so intelligible and undeniable, as to have greater weight with many minds than the most ample evidence collected from quarters less accessible and obvious. Thus, the tree lately found in Craigleith quarry, near Edinburgh, was enough to make a Lyellist of the most obstinate of misbelievers. There it was—no child could see it and doubt that it was a tree—the bark, the bend in the trunk, the spots whence branches had been rent, were all too plain to admit of a moment's mistake. Moreover, it lay embedded fifty or sixty feet in solid rock

"How did it get there?" was the question. Plainly, the rock could not have been rock when the tree got it to its bosom. What alterations of flood, earthquake, and volcano might have been brought into play for the purpose of inserting the hapless monarch of the antediluvian forest in the spot where it unquestionably was found, it is impossible to say. Fortunately, Captain Basil Hall had not long before published a volume of travels, in which occurred the following passage:—

"Some years ago," observes the Captain, "when the Mississippi was regularly surveyed, all its islands were numbered, from the confluence of the Missouri to the sea; but every season makes such revolutions, not only in the number but in the magnitude and situation of these islands, that this enumeration is now almost obsolete. Sometimes large islands are entirely melted away—at other places they have attached themselves to the main shore, or, which is the more correct statement, the interval has been filled up by myriads of logs, cemented together by mud and rubbish. When the Mississippi and many of its great tributaries overflow their banks, the waters, being no longer borne down by the main current, and becoming impeded amongst the trees and bushes, deposit the sediment of mud and sand with which they are abundantly charged. Islands arrest the progress of the floating trees, and they become in this manner reunited to the land; the rafts of trees, together with mud, constituting at length a solid mass. The coarser portion subsides first, and the most copious deposition is found near the banks where the soil is most sandy. Finer particles are found at the farthest distances from the river, where an impalpable mixture is deposited, forming a stiff unctuous black soil. Hence the alluvions of these rivers are highest directly on the banks, and slop back like a natural 'glacis' towards the rocky cliffs bounding the great valley. The Mississippi, therefore, by the continual shifting of its course, sweeps away, during a great portion of the year, considerable tracts of alluvium which were gradually accumulated by the overflow of former years, and the matter now left during the spring-floods will be at some future time removed. One of the most interesting features in this basin is 'the raft.' The dimensions of this mass of timber were given by Darby, in 1816, as ten miles in length, about two hundred and twenty yards wide, and eight feet deep, the whole of which had accumulated, in consequence of some obstruction, during about thirty-eight years, in an arm of the Mississippi called the Atchafalaya, which is supposed to have been at some past time a channel of the Red River, before it intermingled its waters with the main stream. This arm is in a direct line with the direction of the Mississippi, and it catches a large portion of the drift wood annually brought down. The mass of timber in the raft is continually increasing, and the whole rises and falls with the water. Although floating, it is covered with green bushes, like a tract of solid land, and its surface is enlivened in the autumn by a variety of beautiful flowers. Notwithstanding the astonishing number of cubic feet of timber collected here in so short a time, greater deposits have been in progress at the extremity of the Delta in the Bay of Mexico."

This settled the matter at once; nothing could be plainer: the rock was sand when the tree was swept down and embedded; its very position is described as exactly as though the Captain had had his eye upon it when writing. This rock, then, was once sand; and a river capable of sweeping down trees of such dimensions as this, held its way over the spot where I am standing. This is certainly evidence of gigantic change, of revolution, which it makes one giddy to contemplate; yet, after all, the very same process is going on at this very moment on the other side of the Atlantic. I may there see actually in progress operations, to the results of which this apparent wonder before me is the fac-simile. With many minds incapable of doing justice to cumulative evidence, one fact so obvious as this would be decisive.

There is another class of objectors, whose doubts I am peculiarly anxious to remove, because, although their hesitation arises purely from ignorance, yet their motives and feelings are entitled to respect. Persons of imperfect education, unaccustomed to the contemplation of philosophical subjects, too often derive their only notion of the formation of our earth from the account given in the first chapter of Genesis. As that account is very brief and general, it is totally impossible that such persons should acquire any but the most confused and imperfect ideas. Studied, indeed, by the light of philosophy, illuminated by knowledge drawn from that ampler revelation of his works, which the Divine Being has vouchsafed to all his creatures in the great volume of nature, its unexplained announcements are felt to be invested with the unalienable sublimity which belongs to the simple enunciation of mighty truths. The revealed Word of God, as contained in the Holy Scriptures, is one only of the manifestations which he has been pleased to make of himself. Its extent has hitherto been limited; its object is clearly defined, to inform man respecting his relation to his Maker, to unfold to him his immortal destiny, and to instruct him how he may become fit for future happiness. It is in no way intended to supply us with information upon natural philosophy. The great volume of nature is spread before us, on which we may see the history of the works of God traced in characters admitting neither of obliteration nor mistake. The incidental notices, therefore, of such topics, occurring in the written Word of God, must be explained and understood by a reference to the more explicit revelation granted for that purpose. The immeasurable spaces of time required by the geologist, especially under the system we are considering, to produce results which can be undeniably shown to have taken place, will appear to any who understand the usual account, in a certain sense inconsistent with its details. Though this error may, in the present day, be confined to very ill educated, or

childish persons, yet there was a time when it was dangerous for a philosopher to give an opinion on any natural phenomena inconsistent with the ordinary expression of sentiment. Galileo was consigned to a dungeon for asserting that the earth revolved round the sun, whereas it was argued that the sun came forth from the east, and ran his course to the west. Buffon was compelled, by the doctors of the Sorbonne, to recant his theory of the formation of the earth, because it was thought contradictory to the narrative of Moses; and in our country many philosophers, little more than a century ago, were exposed to obloquy, if not persecution, from the same propensity to adduce the authority of Scripture on topics foreign to its purposes.

Let none then fear that his religious belief can be endangered by the rational and unfettered study of nature. It is our duty to study God, in his works and in his Word, and to seek in each that peculiar instruction which they are generally intended to afford. Their lessons, if read aright, will infallibly be found to reflect mutual lustre; distinct, but not discordant; differing, indeed, in dignity, but each bearing the visible impress of the same divine origin.

ANNALS OF THE POOR.

No mistake could perhaps be greater than to suppose that we only can take an interest in the sorrows of very lofty and distinguished characters. Yet, upon the strength of this supposition, how exclusively, for many ages, have poets confined their efforts to the tragedies of high historic life! How inseparable is the idea of *dignity* with that of the *Tragic Muse*! No liberal person will deny that the majestic sorrows of even the remotest historical personages have a power over our sympathies; while the very remoteness of their period of existence, and their removal above the general sphere of life, give a scope for romantic sentiment and elevated poetical diction, which would in vain be sought for in the humble tales of the modern domestic world. I would contend, however, that there sometimes occur, in even "the short and simple annals of the poor," situations of more touching distress, more calculated to make the heart gush up to the mouth in a resistless tide of sympathy, than are to be found in almost the whole circle of tragic composition.

Some years ago there appeared in one of the Edinburgh newspapers an unpretending paragraph, respecting the death of a white mouse in the possession of a poor Italian boy. The incident occurred in George Square, in the south side of the town, upon a very cold day, immediately following a deep fall of snow. The boy was described as quite confounded with grief at the decease of the little animal, which had hitherto been the sole means of procuring his subsistence. A white mouse is perhaps but a poor wonder, and, intrinsically or otherwise, of very little value. But, trifling as it was, it was the poor boy's all. He had ventured from his Italian home, thus far into a less clement latitude, upon the strength of this little creature's life; it was his whole stock in trade; and now that he wanted it, he was reduced to utter poverty and desolation, and no hope remained for the future. The boy had sat down upon an outer stair, reckless of the cold, and the still-descending snow. He had taken the expiring creature from its unsheltered cage, and endeavoured to restore its declining strength by fondling it in his bosom. But it died in spite of all his efforts. Still unwilling to believe in the hardness of his fate, he hurried it back again into his bosom. When, at length, he could no longer doubt of the reality of death, he laid the animal upon his knee, and fixed upon it an eye, which, though filled with only one undrooping tear, seemed to predicate a whole history of future sorrow. Now, this story, though not here related with the simple force of the original, is in itself superior to one-half of existing tragedies.

An incident somewhat akin took place still more recently. There is a poor old soldier who made a livelihood in Edinburgh by going about with a nondescript machine, which he employed in grinding knives and razors. The cry of this man, though probably intended to be nothing unusual, was given in such a broken-down voice as to be almost unintelligible. His wheel was employed both in moving the machine along, and in turning the stones upon which he professed to sharpen his knives. The whole was a perfect ruin, patched in all places—here with iron clasps, there with ropes, and even in some places with old rags. It would appear that a system of careful repairing will serve in such a case for a certain time; but it will not serve for ever. The machine got at length so clogged with its bandages, that when attempted to be turned, it sometimes stood still altogether. One day, in George Street, while employed upon a boy's pen-knife, the fatal crisis arrived. The old man desperately plied the thing upon which his rest rested; but it would not do. He tried to put it to rights, when suddenly the whole engine fell to pieces, and presented only the appearance of a heap of old decayed wood, mingled with ropes and rags. Over this heap the veteran stood like a ruder Niobe. He for the first time found himself in perfect despair. His eye did not see alone that wretched pile of rubbish. It penetrated far beyond, and contemplated a home unprovided with the usual humble necessities, a wife in despair, and children who would cry for bread, and he have none to give them. For a moment there was to be seen upon that lordly street as expressive a picture of real woe as poet or painter could have conceived. Fortunately it was but for a moment. Opposite to the scene of distress lived Sir William Maxwell of Monreith, who, happening to be at the window at the time, observed the deplorable accident, and immediately came forth to the street. Sir William had himself been a soldier, and could sympathise with the sorrows of a brother in arms, however far beneath him in rank. He therefore immediately consoled the man by giving an order for a new machine. Thus, for the sum, I believe, of fifteen shil-

lings, did a man of rank purchase one of the most delightful and ennobling sensations which can warm a mortal bosom—the consciousness of having rescued a fellow-creature from undeserved misery. The last pillow of such a man cannot fail to be smooth.

Another tale of simple distress has been thus related by a country correspondent:—Jean Scott, a poor woman about seventy, lives in the neighbourhood of Hawick. She was the daughter of a small farmer, with whom she lived till her fiftieth year, as a servant. Being then left by him without any provision, she sunk into the condition of a field worker, at some such pittance as sixpence or eightpence a-day. At the age of fifty-seven, even this wretched source of subsistence failed her. She was seized with an universal rheumatism, which nearly deprived her of the use of her limbs. She was then compelled, much against her will, to accept of parochial relief, if relief it can be called, which in almost all cases in Scotland is only a weekly alms, a mere mockery of the wants of a human being. Jean lived in a small cottage in a secluded spot, and, though held in universal esteem on account of her humble goodness and piety, and in compassion for her unhappy fate, she was seldom visited. Almost the only company she could be said to enjoy was that of her cat, a large sensible-looking animal, which she had kept since it was a kitten.

When the parish officers were first applied to on Jean's account, they represented that it was not proper for a pauper to support such an animal, as either it must take the bite from her own mouth, or from that of some other poor person. Jean was informed of this; but, humbled as she was, she would not hear of parting with her faithful Gibbie. "John Garlies," she said, "had little ado when he took notice she kept a cat. The pair beas had been maily her only friend for mony a lang day; and if he were to leave her, what other friend or companion would she hae? In reality," she added, "Gibbie needs nae parish support; he's sic a grand hunter that he can support himself; or, at maist, never expects ony thing but his wee drap milk, that's neither here nor there. Part wi' Gibbie! na, ye may tell John Garlies that, rather than do that, I wad want his fourteen-pence a-week a'thegither." Jean carried the day by her energy. The relief was granted without any farther notice of the cat. At length, one severe winter, the friend who was in the habit of bringing her little weekly sum was prevented from doing so by the impossibility of making way through the snow to her secluded and remote abode. All the meal she had in the house was in time exhausted, and, as she had not many peats remaining, she thought it best to take refuge in her bed. There she lay down, with hardly any hope of being rescued from the most painful of all deaths. For a day and a night she lay thus without food. At length, on the second morning, what was her delight on seeing Gibbie come in with a hare in his mouth, which he laid down by her bed-side! It was an animal which some poacher had wounded, and which, in its subsequent distress, had fallen an easy prey to her favourite. Jean, after devoutly blessing her Maker for this supply, rose, and repairing to the burn for water to dress her meal, was now able to prepare a meal even much superior to her usual fare. She remarked to the person who first came to her in her loneliness, that it was evident that He who fed his favourite children with manna and with quails, was still able to provide food in the wilderness for the poorest of his servants. No meal, she said, was ever so delicious in her mouth, not only from the "savour" of the flesh, but from the taste of God's mercy and goodness which she enjoyed along with it.

As a conclusion to these little traits of the poor, I present the following verbatim as I have received it, from the pen of a lady:—

"As I was hurriedly crossing one of the streets of the New Town about a year ago, I was arrested by hearing a sigh, and, looking aside, I perceived an old man, who slightly touched his hat, when I paused a moment to look at him, as I was conscious the sigh had proceeded from him. I asked him if he was in distress. He spoke not, but took his hat from his head, and, with a piteous, heart-rending look, held it out to me. To my great distress, I happened not to have a farthing in my pocket that day, but I assured him that I would be owing him a penny, which I should pay the next time we should meet. I had frequently seen him before, but, from the circumstance of his never having stooped to ask alms, or attracting my attention in any other way, he had passed unheeded. About a week after this time I met him again. My heart smote me—I had no money in my pocket—I paused, and told him so—he burst into tears. I felt touched with pity, and inquired with earnestness into the cause of his distress. He shook his head mournfully, and replied, that his story was long; that I would not stay to hear the sum of his grief; that the rich were callous to the miseries of the poor—he had found it so. I said, he wronged me; that I had really intended to relieve him, but by an unfortunate chance, had no money both times. The old man saw I was serious, and immediately taking off his threadbare ragged hat, which exposed a snow-white head, told me that he was the son of a gentleman, whom he had scarcely ever seen since his childhood; that he had never known his mother. He had been sent at the age of seven years to a seminary about twenty miles from Edinburgh, and had there received a liberal education. At the age of sixteen he was taken from school, and sent to the University of St Andrews. Thus, he was a gentleman and a scholar. He had always received remittances through an agent of his father, but now the agent sent for him to his house, and told him that his father had been nearly ten years in India; but as he was in ill-health, it was his wish to return to his native country for three years, and go out again; but previous to settling off, he intended to see his son fairly settled there, and begged that his departure might not be delayed. Every preparation was therefore speedily made, and he set out for India, where he arrived after a

tedious voyage of nine months. His hopes were high, but he met his father with uncertainty; he was yet a stranger to him; there was a mystery about his birth that he was never able exactly to comprehend, and into which he was almost afraid to inquire. His father received him kindly. He had a small property in India, besides a commission under the Company. He meant his son to take the management of his property in his absence, and told him that when he was in England, he would take measures to secure it to him as his successor. He then told him that he was a natural child, and an only one; his mother had died shortly after his birth. More he did not say, and more the son could not ask. It was enough. He felt the sting severely, but it would have been still more severe had he not already more than half feared the reality. After some months spent in daily occupations on the grounds, his father left him for England; but, alas! he was destined never more to see his native land—he died on his passage home. As soon as his death was reported to his friends, a nephew came forward as heir to his monies and estate. He went out to look after it himself. The poor unhappy son was despised and neglected; he had not a place whereon to lay his head. Thus do the errors of the guilty often bring punishment upon the innocent. After spending forty years in India, tossed up and down, enduring many hardships, and perils, and ill-health, he gathered as much together as enabled him to return to Scotland, where he had been wandering up and down without a friend to help him, or a relation that he knew of in the world, seeking what he could find, and occasionally making a little money by writing a few short sketches of his travels, and selling them to a country newspaper or magazine. From one thing to another he at last became a poor unhouseled wretch; and when I saw him, he had almost overcome, from mere want and destitution, all feelings of shame, and was just verging upon the condition of a common beggar. We know not half the hardships the poor go through, nor can we know, unless we make inquiry. I gave the old man my card, and begged him to come to my house, and receive some relief. He came, and regularly returned once a week, according to my desire, for two months. After that I heard nothing more of him for a long time, and I began to fear that he might be among the number of those unfortunate individuals who had lately lost their lives by the pestilence. My curiosity was strongly excited by reading in the newspapers, among other cases reported, that of an old man who died after twelve hours' illness. It was supposed he had caught the infection from going to a house where there had been three deaths the night before. I was strongly tempted to inquire into the case, and accordingly made every inquiry both from the medical man of the district, and others concerned. I was right; it was the same old man, with the silver hair and dejected countenance; and I was told that when he was first aware that he was taking cholera, and they were preparing to convey him to an hospital, he made a singular confession. He had heard, he said, that persons who were suspected of having been at the houses of any who had died of cholera, were immediately taken up by the Police, and carried off to a quarantine hospital, where there was every comfort and accommodation; good meat and drink, warm fire and bed—in short, a paradise to what he had been accustomed to. This idea taking possession of his mind, he had at first willfully visited an infected house, and then gone and surrendered himself to the Police. Alas! in seeking for a temporary haven of rest, he had rushed upon destruction. Ere he had been four-and-twenty hours in the hospital, the symptoms of the disease appeared upon his emaciated frame, and, being immediately removed to the sick hospital, he died after twelve hours of intense suffering."

OUR EAST INDIA POSSESSIONS.

THE colonies immediately dependent on Great Britain, and which are treated as provinces of the empire, however distant they may be, are all inferior in point of value and capabilities to the extensive territory of Hindostan, or the East Indies, as the place has been called. This region, which has fallen under the authority, and almost the proprietary, of a body of English merchants, in a manner immediately to be described, is situated at the southern extremity of Asia, and is principally peninsular in its form. On its northern or inland quarter it is bounded by the Himalaya Mountains, a lofty and extensive range, separating it from the Tartarian deserts. On the south it is everywhere washed by the ocean, and at its outer extremity lies the island of Ceylon. The extreme length of Hindostan has been computed to exceed 1900 miles; its extreme breadth has been taken at 1500; yet such is the irregularity of its form, that the total artificial area cannot be estimated at more than 1,280,000 English square miles. This district is marked out, as it were, by nature, into three grand divisions. The first and greatest of these, called Hindostan Proper, embraces all the provinces north of the Nerbuddah, from the river Indus in the east, to the borders of Chittagong. The second, called the Deccan, includes all within the Nerbuddah and the Kistna. The third, or India south of the Kistna, takes in the remainder of the country. The outermost, or narrowest portion of the peninsula, comprehends the districts called the Mysore and Carnatic.

Every geological feature of India is on a great scale. There are vast sandy deserts, many extensive moraines or jungles, and ranges of Ghauts or mountains of enormous proportions. There are thirteen rivers in the country of the first magnitude; the greatest of these waters being the Ganges. The seasons are periodical in India, and every degree of temperature

is to be found, from burning heat to perpetual frosts; but with the exception of an alpine tract among the northern mountains, the climate is strictly tropical; it promotes the growth of all congenial fruits, plants, and vegetables, in the most luxuriant profusion, but is generally injurious to the health of Europeans. The country is easily affected with pestilences from its hot jungles, and these carry off great numbers of the natives, who, according to one of their own writers, would soon increase to too great a number, but for the occasional destruction of life which thus takes place.

Hindostan has been, from a very remote period of history, in the possession of a race of men as singular in their moral and political habits as they are strongly marked by the peculiarity of their physical formation. Though belonging to a variety of petty principalities, the inhabitants, or Hindoos, bore a resemblance to each other; they were scrupulously divided into sects or castes, were simple but munificent in their mode of living, and were Pagans in their worship. Hindostan was overrun by hordes of Mahomedan invaders in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; and these being generally successful in gaining the mastery, quite a new and severe authority was established over India. This interesting country is found to have reached a high degree of refinement, and been engaged in commercial pursuits long before it was visited by Europeans for purposes of civilization. The Greeks and Romans procured from India, ivory, spices, precious stones, silks, and cotton piece goods, in exchange for woollen cloths of a light texture, linen in chequered work, glass, and other articles. It is ascertained that the Hindoos, at an early period, were so far masters of astronomy as to be able to calculate eclipses accurately, and upon sound principles, while numeration by decimals seems to have been indigenous to their country.

While the sovereignty of Hindostan passed from one foreigner to another, or became divided among a multitude of lesser usurpers, the productions of the country, both natural and manufactured, continued to be held in high estimation by nations in the west. The luxuries or manufactured goods of India were nevertheless introduced into Europe by a tedious and expensive route. They were conveyed by land by a march of eighty or a hundred days to the banks of the Oxus, on which they were embarked in vessels which bore them to the Caspian Sea, across which they passed, not without risk, and then ascending the river Cyrus, as far as it was navigable, they were transported over land by a five days' carriage to the Phasis. From the Phasis again they passed to the Black Sea, into which the Phasis falls, while from the Black Sea itself they were conveyed by an easy and well known course to Constantinople. The hazards attending the conveyance of goods were necessarily very great, for in their journey across the vast plain extending from Samarcand to the frontier of China, caravans were exposed to the assaults and depredations of the Tartars, the Huns, the Turks, and other roving tribes which infest the north-east of Asia. Yet the trade with the east was carried on, despite of all these disadvantages, with singular perseverance and ardour. Constantinople became in consequence a great mart of Indian productions.

The Venetians at length interfered in this lucrative traffic, and had the address to secure the most of its advantages. The envy of the other nations of Europe became excited; a thousand schemes were devised with a view of gaining a share in a commerce so profitable, which in the end were successful on the part of the Portuguese. Vasco de Gama, a man of rare talents and courage, succeeded in doubling the Cape of Good Hope on the 20th of November 1497, and pushing boldly across the Indian seas, arrived at Calicut, on the coast of Malabar, on the western side of the peninsula, on the 22d of May 1498.

The discovery of a road by sea to Hindostan produced an extensive traffic with Portugal for the period of a century, but led, as might have been expected, to the ultimate subjugation of the Indian powers by the Europeans. The English having fallen into the opinion that none but the Portuguese had a right to use the route by the Cape of Good Hope, they did not disturb their commerce; the spirit of the nation, however, was not dormant; it was attempted to discover new roads to India, and the adventurous voyages of Drake and Cavendish (1580-6) to Hindostan, by the Straits of Magellan, or the southernmost point of South America, in some measure laid the regions of the East open to British enterprise. In the meanwhile the Portuguese, though they added several valuable stations, particularly Bombay, to their Indian empire, were not left without a rival in the trade to the East, independent of the British. The Dutch penetrated the forbidden channel, and appeared to the dismay of the Portuguese, among the Moluccas. Here the sagacious Hollanders were not slow in supplanting their rivals in the spice trade, whilst they were very little scrupulous in the application of force, as soon as they saw ground to expect that it might be applied advantageously. After a brief but sharp struggle the Portuguese were wholly expelled from the Moluccas; establishments were next formed in Java and Sumatra; and rapid strides were made towards the erection of a new monopoly, which threatened to engross all the most valuable commerce of

these regions. Nor were the Dutch less careful in providing means for the protection of the trade, than industrious in securing the trade itself. They erected forts at convenient stations, which they filled with soldiers, while their armed fleets swept the bays and channels both of the Chinese and Pacific Oceans, with a force which even England would have found it a hard matter, at that time, adequately to oppose. It was no sooner known in London that the Dutch had penetrated beyond the Cape of Good Hope, than the English merchants determined, at all hazards, to keep pace with their rivals.

Now commences the history of the British power in India. In the year 1599, an association of merchants, consisting of a governor and twenty-four directors, was formed, and incorporated by a charter, dated 31st December 1600. The corporation was entitled "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies." They were empowered to make bye-laws; to inflict punishments, either corporal or pecuniary, provided such punishments were in accordance with the laws of England; to export all sorts of goods free of duty for four years; and to export foreign coin, or bullion, to the amount of £30,000 a-year, £6000 of the same being previously coined at the Mint; but they were obliged to return, six months after the completion of every voyage, except the first, the same quantity of silver, gold, and foreign coin that they had exported. The duration of the charter was limited to fifteen years, but with and under the condition that, if it were not found for the public advantage, it might be cancelled at any time, upon two years' notice being given. Such was the origin of the East India Company, the most celebrated commercial association either of ancient or modern times, and which has now extended its sway over the whole Mogul empire.

The first adventure of the Company was exceedingly fortunate. On the 13th of February 1601, five ships, loaded with bullion, iron, broadcloths, glass, cutlery, and other goods, set sail from England, and landed at Sumatra, in July 1602. Commercial treaties were entered into with some of the native powers; a valuable cargo of pepper and other produce was taken on board, and the vessels returned home, falling in with and capturing on the way a richly laden Portuguese vessel. The expeditions which immediately followed were not so profitable. But in 1612, Captain Best obtained from the court of Delhi, at that time one of the chief Indian powers, several considerable privileges, and amongst others, that of establishing a factory at Surat, which city was henceforth looked upon as the principal British station in the west of India, till the acquisition of Bombay.

It is curious to trace the steps now pursued to secure the sovereignty of this extensive and fair territory. In establishing factories in India, the English (says McCulloch, whose excellent condensed account of the East India Company I now quote from) only followed the example of the Portuguese and Dutch. It was contended that they were necessary to serve as depots for the goods collected in the country for exportation to Europe, as well as for those imported into India, in the event of their not meeting with a ready market on the arrival of the ships. Whatever weight may be attached to this statement, it is obvious that factories formed for such purposes could hardly fail of speedily degenerating into a species of forts. The security of the valuable property deposited in them furnished a specious pretext for putting them in a condition to withstand an attack, while the agents, clerks, warehousemen, &c. formed a sort of garrison. Possessing such strongholds, the Europeans were early emboldened to act in a manner quite inconsistent with their character as merchants; and but a very short time elapsed before they began to form schemes for monopolising the commerce of particular districts, and acquiring territorial dominion. A detail of the means employed by the East India Company to secure a footing in Hindostan, and its rise to its present enormous power, will form the subject of another paper.

SAILORS AND MARINES.

The words marine and mariner differ by one small letter only: but no two races of men, I had well nigh said no two animals, differ from one another more completely than the "Jollies" and the "Johnnies." The marines, as I have before mentioned, are enlisted for life, or for long periods, as in the regular army, and, when not employed afloat, are kept in the barracks, in such constant training, under the direction of their officers, that they are never released for one moment of their lives from the influence of strict discipline and habitual obedience. The sailors, on the contrary, when their ship is paid off, are turned adrift, and so completely scattered abroad, that they generally lose, in the riotous dissipation of a few weeks, or it may be days, all they have learned of good order during the previous three or four years. Even when both parties are placed on board ship, and the general discipline maintained in its fullest operation, the influence of regular order and exact subordination is at least twice as great over the marines as it ever can be over the sailors. Many, I may say most of their duties, are entirely different. It is true, both the marines and seamen pull and haul at certain ropes leading along the quarter-deck; both assist in scrubbing and washing the deck; both eat salt junk, and drink grog, sleep in hammocks, and keep watch at night; but in almost every other thing they differ. As far as the marines are concerned, the sails would never be let fall, or reefed, or rolled up. There is even a positive Admiralty order against their being made to go aloft.—*Busi Hall.*

Scottish Anecdotes.

DR WEBSTER.

There never, perhaps, was a man of higher convivial powers than the late Dr Webster, one of the ministers of Edinburgh. He, in the first place, could enjoy a plentiful and substantial dinner. Then, he could drink three, or even four, bottles of wine at a sitting, without injury to his constitution, or even to his senses, for the time. Lastly, his conversation, on all festive occasions, was of the highest kind. In his time, the magistrates of Edinburgh used to hold frequent festivals in the Star and Garter Tavern, Writers' Court (the celebrated "Clirehugh's"), and at all their meetings, they made it their endeavour to have Dr Webster. He was thus led oftener into company than the decency of his cloth could warrant; yet he was, withal, so worthy a man, and so eloquent a preacher, that it would have been a heinous fault indeed which was not forgiven him, both by his flock and by society at large. What rendered this the more remarkable was, that he not only stood high in the ranks of the orthodox, or rigid party, of the Scottish clergy, but was the pastor of a flock which had long been noted for its highflying doctrinal belief, as well as for the strictness of its moral conduct. Reader, he was the minister of that portion of St Giles's called the Tolbooth Kirk; and his congregation was commonly styled the Tolbooth Whigs, on account of their resemblance to the Covenanters of the seventeenth century. Frequent as were his indulgences, and stern as was his flock, Dr Webster lived and died respected, and almost venerated by them. He was a most noted illustration of a great truth—that sins for which ordinary men are condemned and punished with all due severity, are only smiled at, or even perhaps appreciated, in men who have acquired the good graces of the world by genius, or any other agreeable quality. There seemed actually to be a conspiracy among the citizens of Edinburgh to wink at the failings of this popular clergyman. Sometimes, when he was observed walking through the streets of the city at two or three o'clock in the morning, the people would only observe, "Ah, there's Dr Webster, honest man! He's been ta'en out o' his warm bed, I see warrant, at this untimely hour o' night, to see some puir body. Worthy man!—zealous Christian!—he doesna weary in weel-doing, I trow. It maun be sair on the puir man's health, this night work; but it will a' tell to his ain guid in the end o' the day."

On one particular occasion, when, rather later and rather more intoxicated than usual, he was stepping softly along the pavement, a friend who met him could not help remarking, "Ah, doctor, doctor, what wad the Tolbooth Whigs say if they saw ye just now?" "Deed," answered the doctor, with his wonted readiness of reply, "they just wadna believe their ain een;" that is to say, they were so prejudiced in his favour, that they would not trust the evidence of their own senses to condemn him.

The history of Dr Webster's marriage is romantic. When a young and unknown man, he was employed by a friend to act as go-between, or, as it is termed in Scotland, black-fit, or black-foot, in a correspondence which he was carrying on with a young lady of great beauty and accomplishment. Webster had not acted long in that character till the young lady, who had never entertained any affection for his constituent, fell deeply in love with himself. Her birth and expectations were better than his; and however much he might have been disposed to address her on his own behalf, he never could have thought of such a thing, so long as there was such a difference between their circumstances. The lady saw his difficulty, and resolved to overcome it, although at the expense of her own delicacy. At one of these interviews, when he was exerting all his eloquence in favour of his friend, she plainly told him that he would probably come far better speed if he were to speak for himself. He took the hint, and, in a word, was soon after married to her. He wrote upon the occasion an amorous lyric, which exhibits in warm colours the gratitude of a humble lover for the favour of a mistress of superior station, and which is perhaps as excellent altogether in its way as the finest compositions of the kind produced in either ancient or modern times. There is one particularly impassioned verse, in which, after describing a process of the imagination, by which, in gazing upon her, he comes to think her a creature of more than mortal nature, he says, that at length, unable to contain, he clasps her to his bosom and—

"Kissing her lips, she turns woman again;"

one of the finest amatory ideas ever committed to song.

As may be easily supposed, Mrs Webster was not of any means disposed, like the rest of the world, to regard her husband's convivial propensities with indulgence. On the contrary, she endeavoured, by all possible means, to prevent him from remaining abroad too late at night; never permitting him to get home on any of these occasions without questioning him very closely as to the where, the wherewithal, and the wherefore, he had been thus besotting himself. It is well known, that if wives will ask impertinent questions of that kind, husbands will tell dreadful lies, to avoid the wrath which they know must fall upon them in case of their divulging the truth. It was a frequent custom of the doctor to answer, that

he had "just been down calling for Dr Erskine [a brother clergyman,] and the doctor had insisted upon him staying to supper." Dr Erskine, who was a clergyman of great worth, but withal not averse to a joke, happened eventually to learn that his friend Webster was in the habit of making him his stalking-horse in this manner; and he resolved to expose the defaulter, in a good-humoured way, to his much-deceived wife. One night, therefore, when Dr Webster was actually in his house, in an accidental way, he made an excuse to retire, and, leaving Webster to sup with Mrs Erskine, went up to the Castle-hill to call for Mrs Webster. Dropping in, as if nothing unusual was in the wind, he consented to remain with Mrs Webster to supper; and thus the two clergymen mutually supped with each other's wife, and in each other's house, neither of the said wives being aware of the fact, and Webster equally ignorant of the plot laid against his character for veracity. Long before Webster's usual hour for retiring, Dr Erskine took leave of Mrs Webster, and returned to his own house, where he found the reverend object of the hoax as yet only as it were pushing off from the shore of sobriety. When his time was come, Webster went home, and being interrogated as usual, "Why," answered he, now at least speaking the truth, "I've just been down at Dr Erskine's." Let the reader conceive the torrent of indignant reproof, which, after having been restrained on a thousand occasions when it was deserved, at length burst forth upon the head of the unfortunate, and for once innocent doctor. The violence and copiousness of the torrent was such, that for some time the intellects of its devoted object were fairly swept away and buried beneath the inundation. When it had at length subsided, and left some points of dry land above the flood, the doctor discovered the hoax which had been played off upon him; and the whole affair was explained satisfactorily to both parties next day by Dr Erskine's confession. But Mrs Webster declared, that, from that time forth, for the security of both parties from such deceptions, she conceived it would be as well, when Dr Webster happened to be supping with Dr Erskine, that he should bring home with him a written affidavit, under the hand of the said Dr Erskine, testifying the fact.

THE LOST WIG.

While Lord Coalstoun lived in a house in the Advocates' Close, Edinburgh, a strange accident one morning befell him. It was at that time the custom for advocates and judges to dress themselves in gowns, and wigs, and cravats, at their own houses, and walk to the Parliament House. They usually breakfasted early, and, when dressed, were in the habit of leaning over their parlour windows for a few minutes, before St Giles's bell started the sounding peal of a quarter to nine, enjoying the agreeable morning air, and perhaps discussing the news of the day. It so happened one morning, while Lord Coalstoun was preparing to enjoy his matutinal treat, two girls, who lived in the second flat above, were amusing themselves with a kitten, which, in thoughtless sport, they had swung over the window, by a cord tied round its middle, and hoisted for some time up and down, till the creature was getting rather desperate with its exertions. His Lordship had just popped his head out of the window directly below that from which the kitten swung, little suspecting, good easy man, what a danger impended, like the sword of Damocles, over his head; when down came the exasperated animal at full career, directly upon his senatorial wig. No sooner did the girls perceive what sort of landing-place their kitten had found, than in terror or surprise they began to draw it up; but this measure was now too late, for, along with the animal, up also came the judge's wig, fixed full in its determined talons. His Lordship's surprise, on finding his wig lifted off his head, was ten thousand times redoubled, when, on looking up, he perceived it dangling in its way upwards, without any means visible to him by which its motion might be accounted for. The astonishment, the dread, the awe almost of the senator below—the half mirth, half terror, of the girls above—together with the fierce and retentive energy of puss between—altogether formed a scene to which language cannot do justice, but which George Craikshank might perhaps embody with considerable effect. It was a joke soon explained and pardoned: but assuredly the perpetrators of it did afterwards get many a lengthened injunction from their parents never again to fish over the window with such a bait, for honest men's wigs.

RALPH ERSKINE, THE FATHER OF THE SCOTTISH SECTION.

The only amusement in which this celebrated man indulged was playing on the violin. He was so great a proficient on this instrument, and so often beguiled his leisure hours with it, that the people of Dunfermline believed he composed his sermons to its tones, as a poet writes a song to a particular air. They also tell the following traditional anecdote connected with the subject:—A poor man, in one of the neighbouring parishes, having a child to baptize, resolved not to employ his own clergyman, with whom he was at issue on certain points of doctrine, but to have the office performed by some minister of whose tenets fame gave a better report. With the child in his arms, therefore, and attended by the all com li-

ment of old and young women who usually minister on such occasions, he proceeded to the manse of some miles off (not that of Mr Erskine), where he inquired if the clergyman was at home. "Na; he's no at hame yeno," answered the servant lass; "he's down the burn fishing; but I can soon cry him in." "Ye needna gie yoursel the trouble," replied the man, quite shocked at this account of the minister's habits; "name o' your fishin' ministers shall baptize my bairn." Off he then trudged, followed by his whole train, to the residence of another parochial clergyman, at the distance of some miles. Here, on his inquiring if the minister was at home, the lass answered, "Deed, he's no at hame the day; he's been out since sax o' the morning at the shooting. Ye needna wait, neither; for he'll be sae made out (fatigued) when he comes back, that he'll no be able to say bo to a calf, let-a-be kirsan a wean!" "Wait, lassie!" cried the man, in a tone of indignant scorn; "wad I wait, d'ye think, to hand up my bairn before a minister that gangs out at six o' the morning to shoot God's creatures? I'll awa down to gude Mr Erskine at Dunfermline; and he'll be neither out at the fishing nor shooting, I think." The whole baptismal train then set off for Dunfermline, sure that the father of the secession, although not now a placed minister, would at least be engaged in no unclerical sports, to incapacitate him for performing the sacred ordinance in question. On their arriving, however, at the house of the clergyman, which they did not do till late in the evening, the man, on rapping at the door, anticipated that he would not be at home any more than his brethren, as he heard the strains of a fiddle proceeding from the upper chamber. "The minister will no be at hame," he said, with a sly smile, to the girl who came to the door, "or your lad (sweetheart) wadna be playing that gate t'ye on the fiddle." "The minister is at hame," quoth the girl, "mair by token it's himsel that's playing, ho nest man; he aye takes a tune at night, before gang- ing to bed. Faith, 'here's nae lad o' mine can play that gate: it wad be something to tell if ony o' them could." "That the minister playing!" cried the man, in a degree of astonishment and horror far transcending what he had expressed on either of the former occasions. "If he does this, what may the rest no do! Weel, I fairly gie them up a'thegither. I have travelled this hail day in search o' a godly minister, and never man met wi' mair disappointment in a day's journey. I'll tell ye what, gudewife," he added, turning to the disconsolate party behind, "we'll just awa back to our ain minister after a'! He's no a'thegither sound, it's true; but, let him be what he likes in doctrine, deil hae me if ever I kenne him fish, shoot, or play on the fiddle a' his days!"—*From Chambers's Scottish Anecdotes.*

PECULIARITIES OF AUTHORS.

THE habits and peculiarities of authors in almost every branch of literature have, in many instances, been sufficiently ridiculous. Rousseau, for instance, could write only when dressed in the highest style of refinement, and with crow pens, on tinted or gilt paper. Dr Samuel Johnson was almost the only author of the last century who could write at any time and under any circumstances. In recent times, and in the present day, we find the greater proportion of authors free of the peculiarities which were fashionable among their predecessors; occupying half their time with some ordinary pursuit, and taking up the pen in most cases in the intervals of business. The chief composers of music were in general still more affected and impassioned in their feelings than the authors of last century, and were apparently unable to compose, unless under great excitement. It is seen from a recent article in the *Harmonicon*, a respectable musical periodical, that Gluck, in order to warm his imagination, and transport himself in idea to Aulis, or Sparta, was accustomed to place himself in the middle of a beautiful meadow. In this situation, with a piano before him, and a bottle of Champagne by his side, he wrote his two *Iphigenias*, his *Orpheus*, and other works. Sarti, on the contrary, required a spacious, dark room, dimly illuminated by a lamp suspended from the ceiling; and it was only in the most silent hours of night that he could summon musical ideas. Cimarosa, it seems, was fond of noise; he liked to have his friends about him when he composed. Frequently, in the course of a single night, he wrote the subjects of eight or ten charming airs, which he afterwards finished in the midst of his friends. Cherubini was also in the habit of composing when surrounded with company. If his ideas did not flow very freely, he would borrow a pack of playing cards from any party engaged with them, and fill up the *pips* with faces caricatured, and all kinds of humorous devices, for he was as ready with his pencil as his pen, though certainly not equally great with both. Sacchini could not write a passage except when his wife was at his side, and unless his cats, whose playfulness he admired, were gambolling about him. Paisielli composed in bed; and it was there that he planned *I. Barbieri de Siviglia*, *La Molinara*, and other *chefs-d'œuvre* of ease and gracefulness. Zingarelli would dictate his music after reading a passage in one of the Fathers of the Church, or in some Latin classic. Haydn, who was lofty in his conceptions, required a peculiar, but a harmless species of excitement. Solitary and sober as Newton, putting on his finger the ring sent him by Frederick II., and which, he said, was necessary to inspire his imagination, he sat down to his piano, and in a few moments soared among the choirs. Nothing disturbed him at Eisenstadt, the seat of Prince Esterházy; he lived wholly for his art, exempt from worldly cares, and often said that he always enjoyed himself most when he was at work.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES.

THOMAS BLACKLOCK.

AMONG men who have distinguished themselves in literary pursuits, and been remarkable for the difficulties which they overcame in attaining a deserved eminence in society, none can be more worthy of being made known to my juvenile readers than the late amiable Dr Blacklock, a Scottish poet of the last century, and a person who, from his earliest youth, laboured under the irremediable calamity of total blindness.

Thomas Blacklock was born on the 10th of November 1731, at Annan, a town in Dumfries-shire; his parents were natives of Cumberland, his father a bricklayer, and his mother the daughter of Mr Richard Rae, an extensive cattle-dealer. Before he was six months old, he lost his sight in the small-pox, and was thus rendered incapable of learning a mechanical trade, while the poor circumstances to which a series of misfortunes had reduced his father, placed equally beyond his reach an education for any of those professions where the exercise of the mental faculties is principally required. His affectionate parent seems to have been aware, however, that the happiness of his son, shut out from so many of the enjoyments afforded by the external world, must mainly depend upon his intellectual resources; and, in order to form these, he devoted part of his leisure hours to such instruction as his poor blind boy was susceptible of;—he read to him at first the books adapted to the understanding of a child, and afterwards those fitted for a maturer capacity, such as Milton, Spenser, Prior, Pope, and Addison. His companions also, who pitied his want of sight, and loved him for his gentle disposition, lent their assistance in this task of kindness; and by their help he acquired some little knowledge of Latin. Thomson and Allan Ramsay were his favourite authors; and it was as early as his twelfth year that he evinced still more decidedly his love of the poetical art by the composition of an ode, addressed "To a little Girl whom I had offended"—a production not remarkable solely on account of the future celebrity of its author, but because it displays at once his mildness of temper and lively fancy.

Thus early did Blacklock show, that in the course of reading chosen for him, his father had not mistaken the bent of his inclination. But though, as I have mentioned, some of his comrades delighted to forward his favourite studies, and, by their assiduous attentions, to make him forget the deprivation under which he laboured, there were others who took pleasure in rendering him bitterly conscious of his misfortune, and exulted in the success of such practical jokes as it was easy to make him the subject of. It is but too obvious that his own experience at this period, when exposed to the insults of unfeeling boys, suggested the reflection introduced in the article "Blind," afterwards written by him for the *Encyclopedia Britannica*:—"Parents of middle or of higher ranks," he there remarks, "who are so unfortunate as to have blind children, ought by all possible means to keep them out of vulgar company. The herd of mankind have a wanton malignity which constantly impels them to impose upon the blind, and to enjoy the painful situation in which these impositions place them. This is a stricture upon the humanity of our species, which nothing but the love of truth and the dictates of benevolence could have extorted from us. But we have known some," he adds, evidently referring to himself, "who have suffered so much from this diabolical mirth in their own persons, that it is natural for us, by all the means in our power, to prevent others from becoming its victims." The very means taken to alleviate Blacklock's misfortune in some sort increased its force; for as his mind expanded, it taught him to feel with greater keenness his own dependent condition: familiar with some of the noblest flights of genius, and himself become a poet, he would probably have exchanged all his intellectual stores for the ability of earning his bread by handicraft labour. Lamenting his blindness, he thus closes an enumeration of the miseries it entailed upon him—

"Nor end my sorrows here! The sacred fane
Of knowledge, scarce accessible to me,
With heart-consuming anguish I behold:
Knowledge for which my soul insatiate burns
With ardent thirst. Nor can these useless hands,
Untutor'd in each life-sustaining art,
Nourish this wretched being, and supply
Fruit nature's wants, that short cessation know."

Alternately depressed by a sense of his own helplessness, and comforted by that piety with which he seems to have been from first to last most deeply imbued, Blacklock lived at home till his nineteenth year. A fresh misfortune then overtook him in the loss of his father, who was crushed to death by the fall of a malt-kiln, with eighty bushels of grain upon it, belonging to his son-in-law. Blacklock's affection for his parents must have exceeded that of other children; for that anxious solicitude about his safety and comfort, which other boys begin to forget when the business of the world removes them from its immediate influence, had been to him extended over those years when to the helplessness of a child he added the sense and feelings of a man. To his keenly susceptible mind this stroke must therefore have been peculiarly afflicting. And it was attended not only with regret on account of remembered benefits, but

also by the anticipation of future evils. A means of livelihood was indeed suggested by Blacklock's love of music. As he played well on the violin and flute, and even composed pieces with taste, it was proposed that he should follow this art as a profession. "But the unhappy situation in which he was then placed," says the authority upon which this statement is given, "made him dread consequences to which he could never reconcile his mind. The very thought that his time and talents should be prostrated to the forwarding of loose mirth and riot inspired him with an honest indignation." Unable to bring down his mind to this occupation—the only one which seemed within his reach—deprived of the stay on which he had hitherto leaned, blind and feeble, no wonder that the fate of a houseless beggar sometimes presented itself as what might possibly happen to himself. Burns occasionally indulged in similar forebodings; but when he depicts his unhappy fortune, and doggedly exclaims

"The last o't, the worst o't,
Is only but to beg!"

we must be excused for iron-heartedly recollecting that he was an able-bodied man, who, as his brother Gilbert records, never met with his match in mowing—the hardest of all rustic labour. A man so gifted, yet so complaining, meets with little sympathy, as he is entitled to none; but with poor Blacklock the dread of dying a houseless wanderer was more than a mere rhetorical flourish, or the indulgence of a groundless querulousness. While we read the lines in which he unfolds his fears, we perceive that anguish wrung his heart in writing them, and we know that his situation justified his apprehensions.

"Dejected prospect! soon the hapless hour
May come—perhaps this moment it impends—
Which drives me forth to penury and cold,
Naked, and beat by all the storms of heaven,
Friendless and guideless, to explore my way;
Till on cold earth this poor unsheltered head
Reclining, vainly from the ruthless blast
Respite I beg, and in the shock expire."

Although gloomy anticipations like these sometimes intruded, Blacklock did not permit them to overwhelm him, but calming his fears, and resting with a pious confidence in the awards of a protecting Providence, he continued to live with his mother for a year after his father's death.

Some of his poems had by this time got abroad, and made him known beyond his own immediate circle of friends. I shall not pretend to deny that the circumstance of his blindness had some effect, in addition to the intrinsic merits of these productions, in making them be sought after and dispersed among literary persons. On account of their being the verses of a blind poet, they were no doubt read by many who were little able to appreciate their real excellences, and who, having gratified their curiosity, did not concern themselves about the condition of the author; but still by this means the fame of Blacklock's genius was extended; and at last it reached a gentleman, who to curiosity added benevolence of heart. This was Dr John Stevenson, a physician in Edinburgh, who, while on a professional visit in Dumfries, saw some of our author's pieces, and resolved to afford the young man's talents the opportunity of expanding in avocations and amid society more congenial to one so much restricted to pleasures of an intellectual kind. Accordingly, Blacklock was, in 1741, induced to remove to the metropolis, where he attended a grammar-school for some time, and afterwards entered as a student in the college, Dr Stevenson supplying him with the means necessary for the prosecution of his studies. To the friend who thus so efficaciously patronized him, he afterwards inscribed an imitation of the ode to Mæcenas, which occupies the first place in his poems as it does in those of Horace; and that he never forgot the benefits bestowed upon himself is manifested by the ready zeal which his future life at all times displayed for the encouragement of unnoticed genius.

Blacklock's studies were interrupted by the expedition of the Highlanders, in 1745; and during the distractions consequent upon that memorable campaign he resided in Dumfries with Mr M'Murdo, his brother-in-law. On the re-establishment of peace, he returned to college, and studied six years more. In this period he acquired a good knowledge of all those branches of education where he was not hindered by the want of sight, and became better skilled than was common in the French language, from being on habits of intimacy with the family of Provost Alexander, whose wife was a Parisian. It may well inspire wonder that latterly there was no science with which Blacklock had not made himself acquainted—no learned language which he did not master—and no modern tongue, of any acknowledged use to a man of general literature, with which he was not more or less familiar.

Amid the severer studies of classical learning, philosophy, and theology, his attachment to poetry was not forgotten. In 1746, a volume of his verses in 8vo. was published at Glasgow. A second edition followed at Edinburgh, in 1754; and two years afterwards, a quarto edition, with an account of his life by Mr Spence, Professor of Poetry at Oxford, came out by subscription in London.

Hume the historian was among the friends who early interested themselves in the fortunes of Blacklock, and was of considerable service in promoting the subscription to the London edition of his poems; but all intercourse between them was subsequently broken off.

The course of study followed by Blacklock at college was that usually gone through for the purpose of entering upon the ministry; but it was not till after the abandonment of a project (which he began to entertain in 1757, and from which he was dissuaded by Mr Hume, after making considerable preparations towards it) for delivering lectures on oratory, that he finally adopted the resolution of becoming a clergyman. Having applied himself for some time exclusively to the necessary studies, he was licensed as a preacher by the presbytery of Dumfries, in 1759. He soon acquired considerable reputation as a pulpit orator, and took great delight in composing sermons, a considerable number of which he left behind him; these it was at one time the intention of his friends to publish, but for some reason or other this has never been done.

I have already adverted to the unthinking insults to which his blindness exposed him while a boy, and it appears but too certain that many who had arrived at manhood in respect of their outward frame, did not treat him with greater tenderness in his maturer years. They did not, perhaps, decoy him to the edge of a ditch that they might have the satisfaction of seeing him flounder into it, or offer prickles to his grasp that they might be diverted by the contortions of countenance which the unexpected wounds occasioned; but they went to see the blind poet, and induced him to recite his verses, from the same kind of motive that takes people to witness the exhibition of a learned pig. Blacklock's position in regard to such visitors was peculiarly painful: he was in a great measure dependent upon his talents for support; and to have indignantly refused to display them, would have been to raise up obstacles to his own success. His feelings were at the same time the most nicely wrought, and even the triumphs of genius did not afford him perfect gratification; for he knew that his hearers were not carried away by his enthusiasm, but listened with a cold and critical attention, noting every peculiarity of tone, look, and gesture. He has himself told us how exquisitely painful was the consciousness of being the object of such unfeeling curiosity.

In 1762, the Earl of Selkirk procured from the Crown a presentation to the parish of Kirkcudbright in favour of Mr Blacklock, who, having thus the prospect of a competent income, married Mrs Sarah Johnston, daughter of Mr Joseph Johnston, surgeon in Dumfries. But, though not disappointed in the happiness he expected to derive from this union, the gleam of fortune which seems to have induced him to form it, forsook him immediately after the step was taken. He was ordained a few days after his marriage; but the people of the parish refused, on account of his blindness, to acknowledge him as their pastor; and a lawsuit was commenced, which, after two years, was compromised by Blacklock retiring upon a moderate annuity. From the first moment of opposition, it had been his wish to make this arrangement, not from any conviction of incompetency to the duties of a parish minister, but because he saw it was needless to contend against a prejudice so strongly maintained.

In 1764, after the connection between him and the parish of Kirkcudbright was dissolved in the manner just mentioned, Blacklock removed to Edinburgh, where he received boarders into his house, superintending the studies of those who chose to have such assistance. "In this occupation," says Mackenzie, "no teacher was perhaps ever more agreeable to his pupils, nor master of a family to its inmates, than Dr Blacklock. The gentleness of his manners, the benignity of his disposition, and that warm interest in the happiness of others which led him so constantly to promote it, were qualities that could not fail to procure him the love and regard of the young people committed to his charge; while the society which esteem and respect for his character and his genius often assembled at his house, afforded them an advantage rarely to be found in establishments of a similar kind. The writer of this account has frequently been a witness of the family scene at Dr Blacklock's; has seen the good man amidst the circle of his young friends, eager to do him all the little offices of kindness which he seemed so much to merit and to feel. In this society he appeared entirely to forget the privation of sight, and the melancholy, which, at other times, it might produce. He entered with the cheerful playfulness of a young man into all the sprightly narrative, the sportive fancy, the humorous jest, that rose around him. It was a sight highly gratifying to philanthropy to see how much a mind endowed with knowledge, kindled by genius, and, above all, lighted up with innocence and piety, like Blacklock's, could overcome the weight of its own calamity, and enjoy the content, the happiness, the gaiety of others. Several of those inmates of Dr Blacklock's house retained, in future life, all the warmth of that impression which his friendship at this early period had made upon them; and in various quarters of the world he had friends and correspondents, from whom no length of time, or distance of place, had ever estranged him."

In these hours of social relaxation, Blacklock found one of the greatest pleasures of his existence. Music also afforded him a lively gratification; for he sang with taste, and performed tolerably well on several instruments, particularly on the flute. He had learned to play on the flageolet in consequence of a dream in which he supposed himself to listen to the most enchanting melody, produced by a shepherd on a hill-side from that instrument; and he always carried one in his pocket, on which he was by no means averse from being asked to perform—"a natural feeling," says Mackenzie, "for a blind man, who thus adds a scene to the drama of his society."

Finding that his increasing years and infirmities required repose, Dr Blacklock discontinued the keeping of boarders in 1767. But though his bodily vigour began to fail, he experienced no diminution of that benevolence which had ever characterised him. His own genius having been greatly indebted to patronage, he was ready to acknowledge it in others, and especially to

cultivate and bring it into reputation where he found it struggling with obscurity. Nor were his efforts for this purpose confined to occasional acts of liberality—they were laborious and long-continued. He had taken a boy from a village near Carlisle to lead him, and perceiving in the youth a willingness to learn, taught him Latin, Greek, and French, and having thus fitted him for a situation superior to that in which he was born, procured for him the situation of secretary to Lord Milton, who was chief active manager of state affairs in Scotland for many years. This young man was Richard Hewitt, known to the admirers of Scottish song as the author of "Roslin Castle." Hewitt testified his gratitude to his instructor by a copy of complimentary verses, in every line of which may be traced the chief excellence of compositions of that description—sincerity; but he did not long enjoy his change of fortune, having died in 1764 from the fatigue of the office to which he had been elevated.

But we find a still more eminent example of Blacklock's solicitude to promote the interests of the sons of genius, in his being the first man among the literary circles of Edinburgh who appreciated the poetry of Burns (perhaps, indeed, because he had the earliest opportunity of becoming acquainted with it), and kindled in the author the ambition of a prize beyond that of provincial fame. The Rev. Mr Lawrie of Newmills had transmitted to Blacklock a copy of the Kilmarnock edition of Burns's Poems. It is not easy for a modern reader to understand with what wonder and delight Blacklock must have perused them. In our time, the pleasure felt from his most perfect pieces is damped by the recollection of their author's melancholy fate. What reflecting mind can turn from the perusal of the "Mountain Daisy," with any other feeling than that of sorrow that Burns was not a better and a happier man? But while his career was yet to run, with what enviable anticipations must such a perusal have inspired a generous heart! 'Twas poetry the purest and most genuine: he who produced it was of no note; but to what a high place in his country's esteem might he not rise! The world was then all before him, and he capable of attaining whatever fame the most ardent imagination could desire. With calmness, yet with energy, the enthusiastic Blacklock indicated his own admiration and the certainty of the poet's future fame:—"I had taken the last farewell of my few friends," says Burns; "my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed the last song I should ever measure in Scotland—The gloomy night is gathering fast!—when a letter from Dr Blacklock to a friend of mine overthrew all my schemes, by opening new prospects to my poetic ambition. The Doctor belonged to a set of critics for whose applause I had not dared to hope. His opinion that I would meet with encouragement in Edinburgh for a second edition, fired me so much, that away I posted for that city, without a single acquaintance, or a single letter of introduction."—"Blacklock received him," says Dr Currie, "with all the ardour of affectionate admiration; he eagerly introduced him to the respectable circle of his friends; he consulted his interest; he emblazoned his fame; he lavished upon him all the kindness of a generous and feeling heart, into which nothing selfish or envious ever found admittance."

Besides the miscellaneous poems by which Dr Blacklock is best known as an author, he published several other works. In his latter years he was occasionally afflicted with deafness—in his case a double calamity, as at the period when it visited him, he was in a manner shut out from all communication with the external world. In this forlorn condition—old, blind, and sometimes deaf—it was more difficult for him than formerly to bear up against the depression of spirits to which he had always been more or less subject; but his gentleness of temper never forsook him, and though he could not altogether avoid complaint, he was not loath to discover and state some alleviating circumstance along with it. He died from fever, after a week's illness, on the 7th July 1791, and was buried in the ground of St Cuthbert's Chapel of Ease, where there is a tombstone erected to his memory, with an inscription by Dr Beattie.

It has been said of Dr Blacklock that "he never lost a friend nor made a foe;" and perhaps no literary man ever passed through life so perfectly free from envious feeling, and so entirely respected and beloved. His conversation was lively and entertaining; his wit was acknowledged, but it had no tinge of malice; his temper was gentle, his feelings warm—intense; his whole character was one to which may be applied the epithet of amiable, without any qualification.

To Dr Blacklock as a poet, the rank of first-rate excellence has not been assigned, and is not claimed; but his works possess solid merits, which will always repay a perusal. The thoughts are for the most part vigorous, seldom less than just; and they are conveyed with a certain intensity of expression, which shows them, even when not uncommon in themselves, to be the offspring of a superior genius. As the production of a blind man, they present a study of the very highest interest, and have frequently been viewed as a problem in the science of mind.—*Abridged from Chambers's Scottish Biographical Dictionary.*

SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

There are at least one million and a quarter of scholars belonging to Sunday schools in the united kingdom; and, taking the population at twenty-one millions, that will give one child to Sunday schools out of every seventeen persons of the population. The average expense of conducting a Sunday school, of two hundred children, is about £5 per annum for lessons and books, if purchased at the Sunday School Union Depository, and about £15 per annum for rent; the chief part of which sums are, in most cases, contributed by the teachers themselves, in addition to their gratuitous labour. So that the children can be instructed in the Sunday school for two shillings per annum.—*Imperial Magazine.*

Column for Little Boys and Girls.

MY DEAR LITTLE BOYS,

AGAIN I return with pleasure to the agreeable duty of furnishing for your instructive entertainment a relation of certain remarkable things well worthy of your attention, and which, I have no doubt, your little sisters will be quite as glad to hear something of as yourselves. Run, therefore, to the door, and call Elizabeth, and Mary, and Emma, and all the rest of them, and tell them that the gentleman who puts the nice true stories into the Journal for boys has just called, and brought a pretty little book in his pocket, containing a variety of delightful pieces, which it will be quite charming to read by the fire-side. Ay, now that is right—there you are all gathered; so sit down in quietness; and see you, Tom, who are a clever little chap, and are said to be the best reader, take this handsome volume, which you perceive is entitled "ART IN NATURE,"—an ingenious and pleasing production, just published, for the special use of all good boys and girls; and commence reading, in a clear soft voice, the account given by the author of the character and habits of Bees. The chapter, I think, is called "The Confectioners"—a subject which is prettily introduced.

"Spring walks over the earth clothed in beauty as with a garment, and thousands of lovely flowers arise in her footsteps."

"There the rose unveils

Her breast of beauty, and each delicate bud
O' the season comes in turn to bloom and perish.
But first of all the violet, with an eye
Blue as the midnight heavens; the frail snow-drop,
Born of the breath of winter, and in his brow
Fixed like a pale and solitary star;
The languid hyacinth, and wild primrose,
And daisy trodden down like modesty;
The fox-glove, in whose drooping bells the bee
Makes her sweet music; the tangled woodbine,
Lilacs, and flowering limes, and scented thorns,
And some from whom the voluptuous winds of June
Catch their perfumings."

How delighted are children with them! See, they come joyously with what they have gathered; but they have loaded themselves too much!—one blue flower, and then a yellow one, and now one of crimson, falls from the pinafore to the ground; and in the meadows, some are bounding about "to gather king-cups," or make of them a little heap, and then sort or bind them together, with many a sly antic and merry gambol.

And this feeling seems sometimes "to grow with the growth, and strengthen with the strength." People of early times and distant spots showed its powers. Flowers were used at banquets, scattered in the temples, presented on the altars, strewed in the path of conquerors, and offered by the young and the aged as the expression of friendship and of love.

With such thoughts as these, Mr and Mrs Elwood were walking, preceded by their two children, one fine morning towards the end of May, when, as they were about to pass a garden in which there was a snug and rose-covered cottage, Mr Elwood desired his children to stop and observe what was going on. A boy, who had been sent to watch the hive, had just given notice of the flight of its inmates, and forthwith a ringing commotion with pans and fire-shovels, to "charm them down," as the country people say. Happily, the queen-bee quickly alighted on the end of a bough, and the rest of the bees clustered about her, when the neatly-dressed and healthy-looking cottagers spread a cloth on the table, and holding an empty hive under the swarm, suddenly shook them into it, and placed it, with its captives, on the cloth. Then they were carried to the spot they were to occupy, on the edge of a flower-bed; and in a few hours, Mr E. remarked, they would be perfectly contented with their new home.

Frederick and Emma wished to know all about these wonderful little creatures at once; but their father said he could give the best account of the hive bee when he was at home, because he had some books there from which he should like to read the remarks of those who had attentively studied the subject; and, as they were about to return, their patience would not long be exercised.

Accordingly, Mrs E. had no sooner taken off her bonnet and shawl, and entered the parlour where Mr E. and his son were seated, than Emma came bounding in, saying, "Now, dear papa, for the bees!"

"Or suppose we call them the confectioners," said her father. "We passed Mr Duncombe's shop just now, so full of candles, jellies, and preserves; but these little creatures were wholesale manufacturers of sweets even before the flood. In many parts of the east, honey may still be drank from the rock, in cavities of which it is frequently deposited; and doubtless it was often received from thence by the patriarchs themselves. But shall I tell you, my dears, about their making honey only, or shall I connect with this some other curious things?"

"E. Perhaps, papa, making honey would be a very short story; and the longer one of yours is, the better we like it."

Mr E. Then I will begin with reading what Reaumur says about dividing a swarm—a process like that which you have just seen:—"After the tumult excited by their removal into a little glass hive was calmed, and I had looked at it for ten minutes, for the first time in my life I succeeded in seeing a queen bee, which was walking at the bottom of the case. For the first few minutes in which I followed her with my eyes, I was tempted to believe that the stories of the respect paid her by the other bees, the train by which she was attended, were fables rather than facts. She was alone, and walking, perhaps, at a slower pace than the rest. The friends who were with me were pleased to discover in her gait something of gravity and majesty. She advanced unattended to one of the squares of the hive, up which she mounted to join a group of her subjects perched at the top. In a little time she appeared at the bottom, but still sadly neglected. She ascended a second time, and I lost sight of her for a few instants; she then appeared for the third time at the bottom of the hive. Now, however, twelve or fifteen bees were ranged around her, and seemed to form her train. In the first moments of trouble and confusion we think only of ourselves. If we were in a large saloon, and it had suddenly broken down, in the confusion we should forget that others dearer than ourselves were in the room. Thus it was with these bees; for, being huddled into the little glass hive, turned topsy-turvy, the first impulse of each seemed self-preservation; and it was only when they had recovered their composure that they began to recollect the mother, which, in their fright, they had forgotten and neglected."

"In spite of my inclination to believe that the first train

which I had perceived was the effect of chance—in spite of my disposition to think that a big bee would be followed precisely because it was big—I was forced to acknowledge that there was some other foundation for the homage, the cares, and attentions, which the rest paid to her who was destined to be the mother of a numerous progeny. The queen, with her little suite, disappeared for a moment among a cluster of bees. In a short time she re-appeared at the bottom of the hive, when a dozen others hastened to join the train. A row flanked her on each side as she walked; others met her before, and made way as she advanced; and in a very short time she was surrounded by a circle of upwards of thirty bees. Some of these, approaching nearer than others, licked her with their trunks; others extended their organ, filled with honey, for her to sip; sometimes I saw her stop to partake of the food; at other times she sucked them in motion."

E. But what are the other bees in a swarm?

Mr E. It consists, first, of *workers*, amounting generally to many thousands in number, and easily recognised by their smallness and their industry; and, secondly, of *males*, of which several hundreds belong to each community; these are larger than the working bee, and live idly.

F. How do they begin to work, papa?

Mr E. By searching for pollen, or yellow dust, which lies loosely in the middle of flowers. As the breast, legs, and many other parts of the bee's body are covered with a fine down or hair, it enters the cup of a flower, rolls itself round, and is soon quite covered with the yellow dust. The last joint but one of each leg is formed exactly like a brush, and these natural brushes are passed one after another over the various parts of its body to secure the treasure, and to collect it into two little heaps. The thighs of the last pair of its legs are furnished with two cavities fringed with hair; and these form a convenient little basket for its use. The dust collected from a thousand flowers is kneaded into small pellets, or balls, and stuck into these hollows, and as soon as the balls are as large as a grain of pepper, away flies the insect to place its store in the hive. On reaching it, it enters one of the cells head foremost, takes out the pellets from the cavities, and these, being moistened and mixed with a small portion of honey, are kneaded into a substance called in the country 'bee-bread,' a proper supply of which is necessary to the health and strength of the bees during the winter season. Without this, they become consumptive and die. Besides this, however, they want propolis.

F. What is that, papa?

Mr E. A resinous gum found in certain trees, such as the birch, the willow, and the poplar. Near the outlet of one of his hives, Huber placed some branches of the latter, out of which comes a transparent juice of the colour of garnet. On these some weaker bees soon perched. Having taken some of the gum, they formed it into pellets, put them into the baskets of their thighs, and then loaded, flew to the hive, where some of their fellow-labourers instantly came to help them in laying it down: after which the pellets were laid in a little heap as near as possible to the place where they were to be used. A bee then drew out a thread from the mass, which it cut off with its teeth, and held with the claw of one of its feet; and when he came out, one part of the cell was found by this means to be lined: soldered. Others gave him their aid, proceeding from one cell to another, until all the cells destined for the young had been soldered and strengthened by this substance, which is soft at first, and at length becomes much harder than wax.

E. Wax, papa! what is wax?

Mr E. It is a secretion found in the form of scales under the belly of the bee. Among the workers in a hive, some are architects, who plan and build, and, at the same time, nurse the young; and others only bring the materials, but do not give them shape: the former Huber calls the nurse bees; the latter wax-workers. The wax-workers, then, having filled themselves at the flowers, hang motionless in festoons—that is, like rows of curtains one above another—and, in four-and-twenty hours, thin white scales appear under the rings of the abdomen. Huber watched some doing this, and, at length, saw a bee come out from the middle of the group, and, clearing a space about an inch round at the top of the hive, applied the pincers of one of its legs to its side, took off a scale of wax, and began to mine it with its tongue, which sometimes appeared like a bricklayer's trowel, then flattened like a spatula, or broad-bladed knife; and at other times, ending in a point like a pencil. The scale, moistened with a frothy liquid, became glutinous, and was drawn out like a ribbon. This bee, which Huber calls 'the founder,' then put all the wax it could make to the vault of the hive, and went its way: a second did the like; a third followed, but, owing to some blunder, did not put the wax in the right line, upon which another bee, as if sensible of the defect, removed the misplaced wax, and, carrying it to the former heap, placed it there exactly in the order and direction pointed out.

F. What was done then, papa?

Mr E. The result of these labours was a little block of wax, fixed to the vault of the hive, running in a straight line, with a rough surface, but round in its edges, half an inch long, a sixth of an inch high, and about the twenty-fourth part of an inch thick. The wax-workers, having got the stock of materials ready, an architect, or nurse-bee, quitted the cluster, examined both sides of the block, felt about with its antennae, or horns, and then, like a skillful mason, began to scoop out, exactly in the centre, as much of the block as equalled the size of a common cell; and, after kneading what it had removed, placed it carefully at the sides of the opening. Having done this it was succeeded by a second bee; and, in this manner, upwards of twenty workers followed each other, each one taking care to push forward the material so as to extend the walls of the cell.

F. But, papa, is not the stock of wax they make soon out?

Mr E. It would be, were not the wax-workers constantly making a fresh supply. Their dispatch is very great. When first settled in a new hive, they will sometimes form a comb twenty-seven inches long, by seven or eight inches wide, in twenty-four hours; and they will half fill the hive in five or six days; thus in the first fifteen days of their possession of a new abode, as much wax is made as they use during the remainder of the year.

E. Of what use are the cells?

Mr E. The first sort are for the larvae, or *worms* of workers; the second for those of the males, or drones, which are larger, and usually placed in the middle of the comb; the third are the royal cells. Some might suppose that the various cells composing a cake are little habitations for the workers to rest in, such in his own house after the labours of the day, but it is not so;

some are filled with honey, and others are closed up. Most of the cells, indeed, contain a little worm—the young of the bee, which is an object of the greatest anxiety and care. The mode of rest is singular; four or five cling to a part of the hive, and stretch out their hind legs, to which others cling by their forefeet; these do the same for another line; and thus at all times bunches, or festoons, of bees, may be seen reposing. Nuber, however, has seen the workers retire to a cell, and remain motionless for twenty minutes.

F. How long are the bees in growing, papa?

Mr. E. I will read what Huber says:—“The worm of the worker takes twenty days, the male twenty-four, the queen sixteen days, in reaching maturity. The worker remains three days in the egg, and five in the grub state, when the bees close up its cell with a waxen covering; it is thirty-six hours in spinning its cocoon; in three days it changes to a nymph, or chrysalis, passes six in that form, and then comes forth a perfect bee. The male passes three days in the egg, six and a half as a worm, and on the twenty-fourth makes its appearance as a winged animal. The royal insect passes three days in the egg; is five a worm, when the bees close its cell, and it immediately begins its cocoon, which is finished in twenty-four hours. During eleven days, and even sixteen hours of the twelfth, it remains in a state of complete repose. Its transformation into a nymph then takes place, in which state four days and a part of a fifth are passed.”

F. Does she lay any eggs?

Mr. E. On the fifth day after her appearance, she quits the hive; forty-six hours after she begins to lay eggs, and a hive will often contain forty thousand inhabitants, the most of them her own offspring. The first eggs of the queen always produce workers. She must be at least eleven months old before she begins to lay the eggs of males; the time she and the workers well know, and they take care to provide suitable cells.

F. That is very strange. Are the queen's cells like the others?

Mr. E. No; they are like a pear with the stem downwards. When the queen lays in them, they are like an acorn-cup; after this they are quite closed up. Careful as the bees are at other times of materials and of space, when their future queen is concerned, neither is grudged. More was gone to make the cradle of the infant queen than would build a hundred, or a hundred and fifty common cells, and on them no labour is spared.

E. Does a cell ever tumble, papa?

Mr. E. Mr. Walod, onlooking at his bee-boxes one day, saw that a centre comb, burdened with honey, had separated, and was leaning against another comb, so as to prevent the passing between of the bees. This accident made the bees very active, but Mr. W. could not see what was done. But, at the end of a week, he found they had made two horizontal pillars betwixt the two combs, and had taken so much of the honey and wax from the top of each as to allow the passing of a bee; in about ten days more there was a passage quite free.

F. How do the cells look, papa?

Mr. E. As to their shape, I must talk to you another time. But, while building, they seem to be soft, not smooth, nor yet transparent, but of a dull white colour; in a few days they become tinged with yellow, and their edges become thicker, less regular, heavier, and so tough that they will bend rather than break. A glutinous substance may be seen round the opening, and threads of this are applied to various parts, as if to bind and strengthen the walls. This appears to be produced from the propolis of which I have told you. Beside painting and varnishing their cells, as I have just described, they strengthen the weaker parts with a peculiar sort of mortar. And it is remarkable, that, while our houses soon fall and decay, those of the bees grow stronger the oftener they change inhabitants. Every bee-grub, before it changes into a nymph, fastens its skin to the partitions of its cell, but without altering, in the least, the regularity of its figure. Accordingly, the same lodging may serve during summer for three or four grubs, one after the other, and next season, it may be used by an equal number. Reaumur found as many as seven or eight skins spread over one another, so that all the cells, being thus covered again and again, and well dried and cemented with propolis, daily become more solid. When, however, by these means the cells become too small, they are sometimes used as storehouses for bee-bread and honey; and, at others, bees are bred in them: these, therefore, are, of necessity, smaller, and form, in fact, the important class of nurse-bees.

E. Papa, how do they get the honey? For you said that, like Duncumb, they were makers of sweets.

Mr. E. It is obtained from that part of a flower called the nectarium. To collect this, the bee has a trunk or tongue, which it can double up or lengthen at pleasure. It is not like a tube by which the fluid is to be sucked up, but like a tongue to lick away the honied juice, which the bee always knows where to find, though it is only lately that skilful botanists knew where it was. This sweet juice, conveyed by the tongue to the mouth, passes into the first stomach, or honey-bag; and when this is filled, the bee returns to the hive, and taking only a small part for its own use, puts the remainder into one of the cells, or delivers it to another bee at the entrance of the hive, and flies off for a fresh supply. Some honey-combs are always left open for the common use of the workers, but the greater number of cells filled during the summer are carefully stoppered up until the internal supply of honey begins to fail. When, however, the honey is very plentiful, the bees lengthen their cells, or build new ones in which to store it.

F. Papa, I have just thought of something; can you tell us what is done when a queen dies?

Mr. E. With pleasure, my dear, I answer your question, by relating one of the most astonishing facts in the history of bees. When a queen dies, they proceed to repair the loss. For this purpose they form several of their royal cells, and taking a common worker-worm out of the ordinary ones, they put it into a royal cell, feed it with royal food, and, in a few days, the worker becomes a queen. In many parts of Germany, the peasants, knowing this, shut up a few hundred working bees with a piece of honey-comb, containing common grubs three or four days old; the worker-bees immediately set about destroying some of the common cells, make royal cells instead, place the grubs in these cells, and give them food proper for grubs which are to become queens. This experiment never fails. In due time, a number of young queens is produced, all are destroyed but one, and she governs the hive. Thus hives are multiplied at pleasure. And now, my dears, have you any more questions to ask?

F. Not now, papa.

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES.

BY CHARLES LAMB.

I loved a love once, fairest among women;
Closed all her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man;
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school days—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been crouching,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like, I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert thou not born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

EMIGRATION.—UNITED STATES.

“At seven o'clock A. M. (continues Mr. Fergusson, in his “Notes”), we embarked in the North America, a splendid steam-boat, of which the Americans are justly proud, to proceed up the Hudson to Albany, a distance of 145 miles. The morning was rather cold, and a strong breeze blew down the river, wind, and tide, and stream, being all against us, notwithstanding of which, the irresistible power by which we were impelled landed us in Albany within fourteen hours. It is difficult for those who have never seen an American steam-boat, to conceive its elegance and comfort. They are handsomely fitted up, well furnished, and a capital table is kept, while the total absence of coal-smoke leaves every thing tidy and clean. The North America is a day-boat, that is, she performs her voyage between sunrise and sunset, a circumstance of which travellers ought to be aware, as they may deprive themselves of the enjoyment which the highly interesting scenery of the Hudson affords, should they chance to go unawares by an evening boat. This fine vessel is propelled by two engines of ninety horsepower each; the steersman, from an elevated platform in the fore-end, guides the vessel by ropes which communicate with the rudder; a safe and admirable contrivance, universally employed in America, enabling the person at the helm to command an uninterrupted view of the ship's course, and to escape many dangers which might otherwise occur. The North America has a magnificent public cabin, with suitable private accommodation for ladies. Her length is about 225 feet, and her breadth 60. There are a lower and upper deck for promenading, with an awning when the sun is powerful, and, in short, every luxury and comfort which the best hotel could afford, not forgetting the barber's shop, where the master informed me he had frequently the honour of taking fifty gentlemen by the nose in one forenoon. This ancient craft, so greatly degenerated in our own country, seems to be here in its very zenith. Innumerable are the party-coloured poles in every town, indicating the barber's shop, and the general practice being favourable to their calling, they are in great request. I observed, in New York, one of the sides of the ship fitted up with pigeon holes, where stood the labelled soap-boxes of Mr. A, Mr. B, &c., indicating steady customers. The steam-boats and large hotels have generally a barber as part of the establishment, and I found them every where maintaining the old professional character of cleanly, civil, and obliging gossips.

The fare to Albany is only \$5.60, and a very moderate charge for meals. Of course, it is a favourable mode of conveyance, and the company is not always remarkably select. The steward told me he had nine hundred passengers to breakfast and dinner one day last summer, and that 500 or 600 are frequent. With such a multitude some confusion must unavoidably occur, however excellent the arrangements, and these appeared to me to be very complete. Upon this occasion I think we sat down about 200 at table; many homely enough in appearance, but nothing either rude or revolting came under my notice. I was seated at dinner between Judge S—, a very intelligent man, and of much repute as a lawyer, and a plain Massachusetts farmer. We soon got engaged in agricultural conversation, for the judge was well versed in these matters, and afforded much useful advice and information to the professional farmer and his friends. After dinner he entered into more general discussion, running over the different States, and pointing out to me what he considered their relative advantages and draw-backs. He thinks well of Ohio and some parts of Indiana for European settlers, and strongly advised me, if I thought of a purchase, to prefer a farm already, in some measure, improved, and to be upon my guard against designing persons, who are every where on the look-out for strangers. He assured me that a good understanding with Great Britain was daily gaining ground in the States, and that the idea prevailed, that if the two nations stand by each other, they may rule the world.

I had a long chat with the Massachusetts farmers, who had been at New York with a drove of fat oxen, weighing about 75 stones (14 lb. to the stone) each, and for which they had got about 1.22 a-head. They were in high spirits, as every thing there was bearing a high price. Their sheep are Saxon and Merino, and they had refused 2s. 8jd. 7d. cents. per pound for their wool, while last year they considered themselves well paid with 2s. 1d. 5d. cents. They raise fine crops of turnips, and rear many sheep. A ewe fetches this season 9s., while last year she brought only 4s. 6d. They pay a sheep-

doctor 27s. each 100 sheep per annum for his attendance, and this man devotes himself to sheep alone, never interfering with any other stock. He came out to them from England.

Our dinner table was supplied with a profusion of good things, well cooked, and neatly served up. The captain takes the head of the table, the ladies who have no gentlemen along with them being always under his special charge; and, however large the party, or how ever mixed the company, scrupulous deference is paid to the accommodation of the fair; and, I am confident, the most unpolished farmer would suffer any inconvenience rather than interfere with a lady's comfort.

The fare from New York to Albany, 145 miles, is, as before observed, two dollars, or 9s. 6d., and the charge for an excellent dinner 2s. 3d., or half a dollar, including brandy, whisky, and Hollands, placed upon the table, at the discretion of the company—a latitude which, I may here observe, was never abused, upon this or any other occasion, throughout my tour. The scenery of the Hudson, between New York and Albany, is probably not to be surpassed in romantic beauty by any river scenery in the world. About forty miles above New York, the river emerges from the high lands, and, for 100 miles above that, the eye is gratified by a succession of lofty mountains, and bold rocky headlands, clothed in wood—towns, villas, farms, &c. in perpetual succession. The river itself is a noble object, covered with innumerable sloops and steamers, sometimes making abrupt turns amongst the rocks, and again stretching out like a peaceful lake.

Albany is an ancient city in American chronology. It is the capital of the State of York, and the seat of the State government, though now greatly eclipsed by *The City*, as New York is emphatically termed. A great proportion of internal commerce centres in Albany. The Grand Erie, and the Champlain, or northern canal, both find their outlet here, and numerous very large steam-boats ply to New York. The population of Albany is about 16,000. The tide runs nearly to Troy, about six miles above. In contemplating the commercial enterprise, the busy buzz of men, the large warehouses and stores, the variety of equipages, waggons, stage-coaches, &c. which are met on every hand, as a stranger proceeds through the city, it is impossible not to revert to the pictures so graphically drawn by an amiable and venerable authoress, and to contrast its present condition with the early days of Albany. “When this city was a kind of semi-rural establishment, every door had its garden, well, and a little green behind; before every door a tree was planted, rendered interesting by being coeval with some beloved member of the family; many of their trees were of prodigious size, and extraordinary beauty, but without regularity; every one planting the kind that best pleased him, or which he thought would afford the most agreeable shade to the open portico, at his door, which was surrounded by seats, and ascended by a few steps. It was in these that each domestic group was seated in summer evenings to enjoy the balmy twilight, or the serenely clear moonlight. Each family had a cow, fed in the common pasture, at the end of the town. In the evening the herd returned altogether, of their own accord, with their tinkling bells hung at their necks, along the wide and grassy street, to their wonted sheltering trees, to be milked at their masters' doors. Nothing could be more pleasing to a simple and benevolent mind than to see thus at one view all the inhabitants of a town, which contained not one very rich, nor one very poor, very knowing or very ignorant, very rude or very polished, individual; to see all these children of nature, enjoying, in easy indolence or social intercourse,

“The cool, the fragrant, and the dusky hour,”

clothed in the plainest habits, and with minds as undisciplined and artless. These primitive beings were dispersed in porches, grouped according to similarity of years and inclinations. At one door were young matrons; at another the elders of the people; at a third, the youths and maidens, gaily chatting or singing together, while the children played round the trees, or waited by the cows, for the chief ingredient of their fragrant supper, which they generally ate, sitting on the steps in the open air.” It is a sketch not unworthy of Rip Van Winkle himself. The mighty tide of time is ever rolling on, and such scenes as these must now be looked for in the newly reclaimed regions of the west, or the Canadian forest, where many an embryo city, destined to rear its edifices, and to diffuse riches and civilization around, is at this hour commencing its career with the saw-mill, the grist-mill, and the wooden wharf.

The local situation of Albany is very fine, the town being placed upon the declivity of a hill, overhanging the river on its western bank; and the panoramic view from the roof of the Capitol is beautiful and extensive, embracing the Catskill mountains, nearly 4000 feet high, clothed with wood to the very summit, the noble Hudson, spreading out below, and a fine country on every side.”—*Agricultural Journal*.

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